

SHEDDING PERFECTION AND ACCEPTING TRUTH: EXPLORING COMPASSION AND
AN EMBODIED PHYSICALITY FOR THE FIRST SOLDIER AND THIRD GIRL IN *OH*
WHAT A LOVELY WAR

NATALIE SEMOTIUK

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF FINE ARTS

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN THEATRE
YORK UNIVERSITY TORONTO,
ONTARIO

March 2015

© Natalie Semotiuk, 2015

Abstract:

This text is an exploration of one actor's challenge to find self-confidence, to develop a new process with a compassionate approach and a physical practice to construct characters that are physically embodied. First, self-confidence is explored through the techniques of Rolfing and talk therapy with a Jungian analyst. Next, a new physical and vocal warm up is created from a combination of technical skills learned at Canada's National Voice Intensive in Vancouver and theatre classes at York University in Toronto. Positive affirmations are put into practice to ensure self-care throughout the rehearsal process. Subsequently, an exploration of two different methods for constructing two characters, one physical approach for the First Soldier, and one psychological approach for the Third Girl, to determine what method is more effective for creating fully embodied characters in the production of Joan Littlewood's play *Oh What a Lovely War*.

Dedication:

To my parents. This MFA would have been an impossibility to achieve without your constant patience, reassurance and wisdom.

Acknowledgements:

To Ines Buchli, my advisor who continuously kept me grounded. My gratitude could never be enough.

To my colleagues, we survived our own war together and I could not have gotten to this point without you. I am a better actor and a better person because of each and every one of you.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgments.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
Chapter One: [Introduction].....	1
Chapter Two: [Methodology].....	5
Chapter Three: [Perfectionism and Persona].....	6
Chapter Four: [Canada’s National Voice Intensive].....	12
[The Studio as a Sacred Space].....	12
[Syntonics, Body Reconstruction and Embodied Speech].....	13
[The Memorization Process].....	14
Chapter Five: [Rolfing].....	17
Chapter Six: [History].....	21
[The Christmas Pact of 1914 and the First Soldier].....	21
[Women in the British Workforce and the Third Girl].....	26
[Joan Littlewood and <i>Oh What a Lovely War</i>].....	29
Chapter Seven: [Rehearsal Plan].....	32
Chapter Eight: [Warm Up].....	34
[Physical].....	34
[Voice].....	35
[Awareness].....	35
[Personal Inventory].....	36
Chapter Nine: [Positive Affirmations].....	37
Chapter Ten: [Rehearsal and Performance Journal Excerpts].....	38
Chapter Eleven: [Conclusion].....	53
[Approach to Finding the Character].....	53
[Warm Up].....	55
Chapter Twelve: [Addendum].....	59
[Character Explorations and Text Work Excerpts].....	59
[The Character of George Fitzmorris (First Soldier) Element Exploration, October 24 th , 2014]...59	
[George Fitzmorris, Animal Exploration, Chimpanzee, October 30 th , 2014].....	60
[George Fitzmorris, Animal Exploration, Meer Kat Eyes, Erika Batdorf’s Movement Class, November 25 th , 2014].....	61
Chapter Thirteen: [Addendum: Process with Venus].....	63
[Rehearsal Process].....	63
[Text Work].....	64
[Voice Work].....	65

[Physical Work].....65
[Script Analysis].....66
[In Rehearsal and Relationships Between Characters].....67
[Performance, Warm Up and Conclusion].....69
Bibliography.....70
Appendix.....
 Appendix A:[Molly Suffolk (The Third Girl) 26 Questions, excerpts from
 journal].....72
 Appendix B:[Example from Prompt Book: Third Girl
 Scene].....80

Chapter One: Introduction

For my graduate thesis in the Master of Fine Arts program at York University, my acting challenge is to manage my perfectionism, my memorization process and my physicality within the roles of the First Soldier and the Third Girl of the play *Oh What a Lovely War*. My goal will be to find a new methodology to fully embody my performance of these characters to make them raw and truthful.

When I began my thesis research, I identified my acting challenge as finding confidence in my acting. However, this evolved to include exploring ways to find mental and physical confidence in myself. In order to do this, I found that first I needed to identify my public persona, then let go of my inner perfectionist and find a way to maintain a positive perspective toward my work. Subsequently, I needed to research and develop a new structured warm-up to ensure a body free of unnecessary tension in order to find fully embodied acting work. Lastly, I decided to employ two different methodologies for approaching each of my two thesis roles in *Oh What a Lovely War*. For the First Soldier I will use a physically outward, mentally inward approach by creating a character from physical explorations before implementing written character research and then for the Third Girl a mentally inward, physically outward approach by doing written character research first and using those details to construct the physical body of the character to determine if one methodology provides optimal results and delivers a fully embodied performance.

At the end of the spring semester of my first year of the MFA program, I had conferences with my faculty where we discussed my lack of confidence in my acting. The feedback I received was that I was talented and a good actor but the problem was that I needed to believe that fact myself.

This was frustrating to me because it did not seem to be an acting problem but a personal problem. I surmised that the issue I really had came from low self-confidence. This would manifest when I would be on stage, connected in my acting work, my scene partner, the text and all of a sudden I would freeze up. I would become aware of being on stage in front of a room full of people and would then struggle to get back into the scene work because I was occupied with internal negative and judgmental voices.

To address these issues, I set out to research four different things. The first was to address some voice and physical technical training that I felt I lacked and to see if I could apply a different approach to my work in studio while attending Canada's National Voice Intensive in Vancouver. The second was to address my self-confidence challenges by working with a Jungian analyst, Christina Becker. In working with Christina, I addressed my self-confidence challenges by coming to terms with what I would identify as my perfectionist complex and the reliance on a public persona I developed over the years to deflect from my insecurities. I also researched memorization processes to see what was scientifically most effective for memory retention. The fourth area I undertook to research was to see if I could achieve confidence from a physically outside in as opposed to mentally inside out approach. To do this I started working with Rolfing practitioner, Heather James.

As for my methodology for my performance of the First Soldier and Third Girl in *Oh What a Lovely War* I intend to reduce the level of on-stage anxiety with these roles by changing my mental attitude towards my process as well as my physical approach to the roles. For the mental approach, instead of expending extra energy trying to cover up my anxieties and neuroses in order to achieve a perfect performance, I will endeavor to find ways to trust my acting work. To

do this, I also must shed my own harsh self-criticism by nurturing myself through the process with positive affirmations as well as redefining the parameters of how I assess my own work. I will exercise compassion towards myself and explore a truthful, embodied performance and aspire not to place judgment on it. To address my perfectionism, I will employ a daily practice of positive affirmations by listing three things I consider to be a success from each rehearsal and performance. I will also approach the process of memorization differently, to take more time with it, breathe in the text and then explore imagery with physical gesture, instead of utilizing my previous rote memorization. Lastly, my exploration of Roling practices of realignment with Rolfer Heather James, as well as some reconstructive Syntonics practice learned from Judith Koltai and Cindy Block at the Voice Intensive in Vancouver to find grounding, will contribute to the development of a new preparation method to ensure that I am not carrying any superfluous tension. Because both these characters must sing exuberantly, my challenge will be to explore physical embodiment for breath and body within movement.

I will explore a specific, structured warm-up and apply a different methodology, one physical and one intellectual, for each of the two characters for the play *Oh What a Lovely War*. The first method will begin with a mentally inward and then physically outward approach for the character of the Third Girl, analyzing psychological aspects of the character before entering physical acting. The second method will be a physically outward and then mentally inward approach for the character of the First Soldier, exploring different types of physical exercises to develop a character before approaching psychological research. I will also reference personal solo rehearsals in studio and rehearsals with the company. I will explore how I achieve an embodied performance and identify success criteria to discern which approach works best for me.

To complete the research I will also explore the characters by studying the lives of British soldiers in the first few years of the war, particularly around the event of the “Christmas Truce” of 1914. I will also study how British women, particularly women from Lancashire, helped the war front with producing ammunition as well as clothing. I will also research the production history of the play itself.

Chapter Two: Methodology

In order to complete this research the intent was to begin with reviewing published literature in books, peer-reviewed journals and articles that were pertinent to the topics of confidence, self-esteem, feminism, stereotypes, archetypes and typecasting. However, as I delved into the literature, I narrowed the subject area to focus on the particular topics of perfectionism, persona, eating disorders, and Rolfing as well as expanding my research to include cognitive and neuroscience case studies of performers. I then researched the works of Uta Hagen, Constantin Stanislavski, Eric Morris for psychological acting methods, as well as Stephen Wangh and Moni Yakim for physical acting approaches. I also included my class notes and observations on solo and group rehearsals as well as personal reflections on my experiences particularly in talk therapy sessions, Rolfing and the Canada's Voice Intensive in Vancouver.

Chapter Three: Perfectionism and Persona

Previously, when I worked as an actor, I would freeze during certain moments on stage. This became particularly evident in the spring production of *The Penelopiad*. It was in those instances when I could feel myself pull away from the text and instead allow a stream of harsh judgments to spew inside my head. I came to realize that this was due to a harsh inner critic as well as setting impossible standards of perfection to reach in a performance. I decided to address this by reviewing literature about Jungian archetypes, self-esteem and stereotypes. However, after working with Jungian analyst Christina Becker I realized that my problem with self-confidence as an actor was complex. She suggested I read *Addiction to Perfection* by Marion Woodman. This book investigates perfectionism and addiction, primarily through the study of eating disorders. What started out as an investigation in confidence grew to encompass a much bigger problem: my inner control-freak, an unhealthy relationship with food and the persona I had developed in order to cover it up.

Perfectionism was defined as, “personality disposition characterized by striving for flawlessness and setting excessively high standards for performance accompanied by tendencies for over-critical evaluations of one’s behavior” (Childs 577). I identified with being a socially-prescribed perfectionist, “whose key characteristics are concern over others’ high standards and concern over living up to these standards, driven by fears of losing approval and acceptance from others if one is not perfect” (Childs 577). Unbeknownst to me, I was a staunch perfectionist who compensated by binge eating and coped by developing a wickedly strong public persona. I set up unattainable expectations for myself and the work yet put on a public persona that was laid-back

and lackadaisical. If I did not appear to care that meant that if I failed, it would not matter much. The truth was I often cared too much.

As a result, I learned to compensate and punished myself with food. When things went wrong or were emotionally trying in my life, I would both take solace in and punish myself with food. I would eat until I would numb myself and put myself in a catatonic state where all I could do was fall asleep. That way everything that I had failed at or could not deal with emotionally would quiet itself with food. It was like the character Brick from Tennessee Williams' play *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* describes what alcohol did for him and why he would drink, "It's like a switch, clickin' off in my head. Turns the hot light off and the cool one on, and all of a sudden there's peace." (Williams 12). I was constantly searching for peace and eating to excess was the only way to achieve it.

It turned out that this was a compulsive behavior found in people who suffer from a Binge-eating Disorder. According to the National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders, Binge-eating disorder is

Characterized by insatiable cravings that can occur any time of the day or night, usually secretive, and filled with shame. Bingeing is often rooted in poor body image, use of food to deal with stress, low self-esteem and tied to dysfunctional thoughts.

More common than Anorexia Nervosa or Bulimia Nervosa, Binge Eating Disorder occurs in 1>35 adults in the U.S. This translates to 3-5% of women (about 5 million) and 2 % of men (3 million).

I was not alone in my addiction or perfectionism. In fact, according to Marion Woodman in her book *Addiction to Perfection* she suggests that, "many of us—men and women—are addicted in

one way or another because our patriarchal culture emphasizes specialization and perfection...[and] working so hard to create our own perfection we forget that we are human beings” (Woodman 10).

This tied in to my view of my own self-confidence. On the outside I appeared calm but inside I was a wreck of neuroses. Constantly in self-doubt and self-loathing, no matter how hard I worked no level of achievement was ever great enough or high enough. Then, when my level of standard was not achieved it would result in guilt, anger and self-loathing. I associated success with approval from others. If I failed then I was not worthy of acceptance. There was always something wrong to be found and those details would sit heavier in my mind despite whatever compliments I would receive.

I also came to view myself as lazy when it came to work. I would procrastinate until near the very end of a deadline when I would then work in a frenzy to complete my work on time. No matter the project, I told myself that I could not do it and that I did not want to do it because it would always be poor quality, nowhere near the level of quality as anyone else. I held myself to a different standard, one that was impossible to reach. As my research continued, I came to realize, this was not actually laziness, but fear of failure. Julia Cameron wrote about laziness and perfectionism and identified them as characteristics of blocked artists. She wrote in *The Artist's Way*,

Blocked artists are not lazy. They are blocked. Being locked and being lazy are two different things. The blocked artist typically expends a great deal of energy—just not visibly. The blocked artist spends energy on self-hatred, on regret, on grief, and on jealousy. The blocked artists spends energy on self-doubt...when these large tasks are not accomplished, or even begun, the blocked artist calls that laziness. Do not call the inability to start laziness. Call it fear. (Cameron 152-153)

Identifying that my habits were not laziness but fear of failure was liberating for me. A simple change of that perspective allowed me to feel a sense of relief and began a change in how I approached things. Calling it laziness was detrimental to me because it seemed like any task I undertook was an impossible one and that it was my own fault. Calling it fear changed it to something that allowed me to approach it with compassion.

As another way to compensate for my compulsive behavior, I created a public persona. I became a loud, sassy broad who could not get hurt, who seemed incredibly confident, did not appear weak and really did not feel much of anything. It was a muted experience. Within my persona, I would take whatever comments I received without being affected and collect them for when I would be alone. However, when I was alone I would dissect them one by one, sifting out the good to fester in the bad and then numb it out by bingeing. But in public, I was happy, bubbly, never upset.

This behavioral pattern, I came to realize is similar to that of a perfectionist who covered up their compulsions with a persona. Carl Jung described the persona as the, “mask of the actor,” claiming, “whoever going to himself risks a confrontation with himself. The mirror does not flatter, it faithfully shows the world whatever looks into it; namely, the face we never show to the world because we cover it with the *persona*” (Jung 20). Marion Woodman defines it as, “One’s social role, derived from the expectations of society and early training. A strong ego relates to the outside world through a flexible person; identification with a specific persona... [that] inhibits psychological development” (Woodman 196). My problem was that I got so used to numbing my mind and body by bingeing, I somehow had to relearn how to open that communication between my body and mind again without relying on a persona.

The problem however was that my persona began to weigh on me, which I realized when the program started and this struggle became clearer as the school year went on. Previously, because I could not be myself in public, others began to expect me to always be like my persona. If I was tired or not in the mood to entertain, people would ask me if I was not feeling well, until I would put the mask back on and fake it. The problem was it got to the point where I could no longer tell when I was faking it or when I was really myself. I began to avoid people. The idea of going out socially with anyone became a daunting task. I isolated myself and took solace in being alone because it was the only time I did not have to try. It was then that I could indulge in the critical voices in my head and let them inflict their damage upon me. Then I would binge. But every time I went out, the mask would slip back on.

The cracks in this façade began while working with David Smukler in September. He mentioned in class one day that I had armor about me. At the time, I had no idea what he meant. Looking back, I realized this armor was my persona. As the year went along I realized that what my faculty and peers were interested in seeing from me was not the public persona, but the person underneath. I did not have the capacity to understand this fact. I had worked on this persona for years and for years it kept me what I considered to be safe. Then suddenly I was being asked to abandon it? Then what would be left?

That is why I believe that for the majority of the first semester of the program, I was terrified. I had made it my business to hide behind my persona and suddenly without that armor I was exposed. I did not have my same defenses and I was suddenly tossed into an emotional chaos from which I had spent my most of my life running away.

It was in the second semester that I became a little more used to the chaos. It seemed less daunting. It was still there, of course, but now it became more familiar. After choosing not to feel for so long, all of a sudden I was aware of the extent of my own emotional turmoil. I remember having a conversation with David Smukler where he mentioned that I had an emotional depth in me that could allow me to play the great theatre roles: Jocasta, Medea and so forth. Needless to say, at the time, I was skeptical. I was so lost in my own self-doubt and fear of failure that I could not believe him.

When the semester ended, I was lost. I no longer had the comfort of my persona to fall back on but I did not have the strength yet to truly be myself. However, working with Jungian analyst, Christina Becker to identify and then address some of these issues allowed me to better understand why I thought the way I did and that with a few simple changes in perspective, I no longer had to be so hard on myself. Instead of calling myself lazy, I owned my fear of failure. Instead of telling myself, "I can't, it's too hard, go eat," I began to tell myself, "I can, I'm taking responsibility for myself and my body and I'm going to ask what it is I am really hungry for." Instead of only listening to the constant negativity, I began to listen to a more positive perspective as well. Working with Christina helped me to surrender to whatever I was feeling instead of fighting against it. It is a process that will not be perfect or change overnight but for maybe the first time ever that is okay with me.

Chapter Four: Canada's National Voice Intensive

The Voice Intensive was an important experience for me because learning from the faculty in the context of a voice-focused intensive allowed me to develop a more structured technique for my personal process in my voice and text work. What started as a research question for my approach to the work expanded into different benefits for my work mentally and physically.

a) The Studio as a Sacred Space Only

My initial challenge for the Voice Intensive was to approach the work in a different way. My practice for studio work had previously been that once the instructor starts, I start. I would walk into the classroom, greet my colleagues and catch up with them while we engaged in our warm-up. It was a lackadaisical approach and one that did not require much effort. But it also meant that I was not fully engaged in the work until about fifteen to thirty minutes into the class.

I changed my approach by making the studio a workspace only. If I wanted to socialize with people, I would do so but only outside of the studio. This approach was a challenge for me, especially for the people-pleaser in me. When people approached me I had a hard time turning them down. But looking back, I realized that this was to my own detriment. I was not giving myself the time or space I needed to arrive into the work. So when we started I would be trying to catch up at first and feel thrown off.

I came to realize that this approach also was most effective when I began with that mind set even before I entered the workspace. The transition had to occur before I entered the studio so that

once I was in the room, the space for work and work only. It gave me an inherent sense of respect for the rehearsal space and for prioritizing my needs. It was not always perfect and I had my off days but it did change my perspective on how to value my own work as well as my colleagues.

b) Syntonics, Body Reconstruction and Embodied Speech

Another unexpected benefit was the Syntonics movement work we did with Judith Koltai and Cindy Block. Syntonics is a form of physical work,

Guided by educational, rehabilitative and aesthetic principles. The goal [is] elimination of unconscious dysfunctional muscular and movement habits and recovery of harmonious balancing of effort in action and in rest... it addresses itself to habits and behaviors caused by and manifested in excess muscular contraction and compensatory dis-alignment. (Koltai, Syntonics)

This was an important exploration for me for two reasons. The first related to an injury that I sustained when I was 11 years old. I had a bad skiing accident, which resulted in a torn ACL muscle, a broken tibia as well as a broken kneecap. I needed constructive surgery and a lengthy rehabilitation process. I believe that as a result of that injury my body's natural alignment was thrown off. It also impacted how I engaged with my body. I began to see my body as a flawed instrument made up of faulty sections: a broken knee here, a pelvis out of alignment there, slouching posture. As the years passed it manifested itself in more insecurity.

With the work we did in Judith's class, it was a gentle exploration and reconstruction of my body. There was no way to prove that one person was better at it than another since the work was completely individual. It was slow and reflective and it forced me to slow down and listen to the information my body was telling me. It made me begin to look at how one part of my body grips

or tension results in correlation with another part. My perspective began to change when I looked at my body in this way. I began to view all sections of my body as part of a bigger community.

The work also deconstructed the behavioral holding of my body. It showed me that no matter what had happened to me physically in the past, my body was resilient. It could bounce back. I gained more flexibility and strength. The way I held my body began to change. I began to find more space in my physical container and because it was an individual process I found that I did not get trapped in my constant comparison to others.

Another benefit of working with Judith was her practice of embodied speech. Embodied speech requires an, “unfolding potential rather than that of problems. It avoids diagnosis, analysis or interpretation. Its vocabulary is non-evaluative, specific and non-habitual.” (Koltai, Embodied Speaking) This was a challenge for me because I was used to a very negative view of myself. Everything had to be qualified because that was the polite way of communicating. To me it symbolized modesty. It followed the pattern of “this was a success” and immediately qualifying with, “because I used to do it this way.” Judith, however, encouraged me to stop with just the success. At first it was difficult to accept that I did not always need to balance a positive observation with a criticism but after a while, giving myself the permission to view something simply as a success became liberating and I changed how I evaluated my work and myself.

c) The Memorization Process

Another important realization I had at the Intensive came in a class with voice instructors Dale Genge and Brad Gibson. I realized that I often had trouble memorizing my text, no matter what

the project. This anxiety would ultimately manifest on stage during performances. I would have moments where I would lose my lines and that would pull me out of the acting work. Suddenly I would realize that I was on a stage in front of a room full of people and freeze up. I recognized that along with my harsh self-criticism was that the problem originated from my method of memorization.

In Dale and Brad's class, we were exploring the idea of images within the text. They used a process they affectionately called "grokking," which is a term developed from Science Fiction. It was the process, "to understand intuitively or by empathy; to establish rapport with" and "to empathize or communicate sympathetically (with); also, to experience enjoyment" (Oxford English Dictionary). We were given the exercise of going through the text and gesturing freely with whatever inspiration came to us. I adapted this process when I worked on a scene later with my scene partner. I believe as a result of this process, of integrating this movement and gesture that it gave me something that I had been missing in the memorization process.

When it came to my own process with memorization, I would work on text right before I would go to bed. I had read that memory worked better when learning occurred right before sleep. Indeed a study done in 2012 suggested that, "memory was superior when sleep occurred shortly after learning rather than following a full day of wakefulness." (Jessica D. Payne). This was helpful but also inhibitive. After further research I learned that another an important factor for successful memory retention required integrating full body movement.

A study done on embodied memory by Neil Utterbeck included in Nicola Shaughnessey's *Affective Performance and Cognitive Science*, suggests that, "Memory is a physical act."

(Utterbeck, Embodied Memory and Extra-Daily Gestures). Utterbeck studied three groups of individuals and their process of memorization to see which group had the best average of retention. The test subjects were all given the same sonnet to memorize, however they were split up into three groups to determine the process in which they would memorize. The first group were required to sit and memorize while holding a book in their hands, the second to stand and gesture however they liked, and the third to gesture with specific choreographed movements. The results of the study were overwhelming. Those who were allowed to freely gesture significantly retained their sonnet more successfully than the other two. Even the group who were asked to sit retained their information better than the group with specific choreography, suggesting that the choreographed movements drew, “attention away from the assigned task,” and seemed to, “add additional cognitive front-loading” (Utterbeck 152). It appeared that as if these self-generated gestures engaged the person’s retention in a way that no-movement or forced-upon movement could not.

Self-generated gestures aid the agent in remembering words over long periods of time, for example, a rehearsal process. The body remembers itself. Memory, then, is not merely the mental activity confined to an isolated brain but a rich integration of body within a contextualized world. Gesture allows the body to *do* the words, to quite literally shape it and give it form in and through the body.... The gestures are aiding the speaker’s understanding of meaning. (Utterbeck, Embodied Memory and Extra-Daily Gesture 152)

This new process of memorization was incredibly helpful for me and several months later I am still able to retain the text, something that I have never been able to do. It also gave me an inherent sense of confidence within the text. I did not have to work so hard at remembering the text because my body remembered. It is a process that I will include when approaching my thesis roles.

Chapter Five: Rolfing

The next course of action I undertook was to study Rolfing or Structural Integration in order to see if confidence could be achieved physically inward as opposed to mentally outward.

Structural Integration,

is a demonstration of the principles of the body, the manner in which it is made, and how this creature can change... [it] is a conversion of these techniques into a therapeutic tool. The technique itself involves a ten-hour cycle of deep manual intervention in the elastic soft tissue structure (myofascia) of the body. The goal of this treatment is a balance of the body in the gravity field; the principle of the treatment is, in brief, that if tissue is retrained, and balanced movement demanded at a nearby joint, tissue and joint will relocate in a more appropriate equilibrium.
(I. P. Rolf)

This study of fascia and structural alignment was a technique developed by a biochemist named Ida P. Rolf in the 1930's in New York. Since then many performers and athletes have adopted the practice to deal with a variety of physical issues. For example, "actor Christopher Reeve was treated around his lungs to allow him to breathe without his ventilator. Figure skater Michelle Kwan has used the therapy to gain a competitive edge, help with her balance, and recover from injuries more quickly" (Fisher).

I began with working with Rolfing practitioner Heather James. She suggested I start with three sessions to see how Rolfing affected me. The outcome was significant to me after the second session. With integrating Rolfing, I felt that it expanded on the bodywork we did with Judith Koltai at the Voice Intensive. However, for me, where Judith's Syntonics work was reconstructive, Rolfing was revolutionary because it was a guided form of bringing my body back into its original alignment by manipulating fascia. Fascia "is a web of thin elastic tissue which exists in continuous layers throughout the body" (Feitis, Ida Rolf Talks About Rolfing and

Physical Reality). Essentially it is the soft tissue that envelops muscles or bundles of muscle. The process of Rolfing,

Seeks to enhance function by changing structure.... bones are held in place by soft-tissue—muscles, ligaments, tendons, etc. If a muscle is chronically short it will pull the bone out of balance. Repositioning the bone is not enough; the individual muscle and allied tissue must be lengthened if the change is to be permanent. In addition, when one part is in trouble, the body as a whole gets out of balance. (Feitis, Ida Rolf Talks About Rolfing and Physical Reality 5)

This was significant to me because it helped me understand that many of my insecurities may be based on the idea that my body was out of alignment, therefore my body felt insecure. As mentioned earlier, I suffered a severe knee injury from a skiing accident when I was eleven years old. This resulted in physical compensations to adjust over the years. One of my hips was slightly higher than the other; one of my legs appeared to be longer than the other. I was knock-kneed and my shoulders slouched, which I also emphasized more over the years in order to hide my developing chest. I accepted that this was my ordinary alignment. I came to realize in working with Heather and studying Rolfing that this was my body out-of-alignment and my feelings of insecurity towards myself could have stemmed from my body feeling insecure in its own alignment. This manifested mentally because, “when your two legs are not properly under your body, you are insecure, and you’ll act like it and feel like it” (I. Rolf 25).

Working with Heather, she used physical pressure, an almost but not quite form of deep-tissue massage, to re-integrate the fascia to an easier level of functioning. Through this manipulation, Heather would massage and bring energy into the fascia in order to, “stretch and guide fascia to a place of easier movement...[and] to bring a part to where it anatomically belongs and there establish a new movement pattern” (Feitis, Ida Rolf Talks About Rolfing and Physical Reality). Instead of slowly reconstructing the body, through the work with Heather, it felt as if my body

was reset. When I walked out of her office after the second session and especially the third session I felt ease in my body that I had not felt in years. Things felt balanced, secure and there was a sense of space that I cannot remember feeling before. It gave me an idea of what the body was supposed to feel like when it was free of unnecessary tension but more than that, gave me the feeling of what my body was capable of feeling when balanced and open. I even had a friend of mine tell me that I looked like I was carrying myself differently, and indeed I was.

Heather also gave me a change of perspective. I assumed that because of my knee injury that I had weak legs. I was constantly rolling my ankles resulting in twists or sprains. I accepted that because of my knee injury, I would always have weak legs. Not true. In fact, Heather told me during our second session that I had incredibly strong legs, the problem was that after so many years my muscles were clinging to the bones instead of moving freely with flexibility. I remember getting up and walking after her work and I could not believe that I was walking so freely. It also gave me an opportunity to love something about my body that I had spent years feeling inadequate about. My legs were strong? Now they felt like it.

This also began the process of listening to my body again. Over the years I had learned to shut off that dialogue between my mind and body because after a while it was just too overwhelming. My body constantly felt off and that resulted in me feeling off and unhappy. So I self-medicated by binging on food in order to further the miscommunication and remain pleasantly numb. However, when I began to feel the open channel I also began to listen to what my body was beginning to tell me. Instead I began to view my body as an instrument, one that belonged in relationship with my mind not in separation from it. It was not listening to the needs of my body that got me into a state of depression. Working with Heather, the areas that I viewed as “problem

areas” began to subtly change. With my pelvis underneath me feeling open and spacious my spine naturally felt lengthened which corrected my slouch. When she worked on my chest a place where I held a lot of tension I suddenly felt space, which allowed my shoulders to widen leaving me with the feeling of an open heart.

Chapter Six: History

a) The Christmas Pact of 1914 and the First Soldier

The scene with the First Soldier in *Oh What a Lovely War* details the events of the Christmas Pact in December 1914 when a temporary cease-fire between the two warring sides on the western front took place. For my first thesis role, the First Soldier, I wanted to research the events leading up to the eventual meeting and fraternization of the soldiers on the battlefield between the trenches of the two opposing factions. In order to understand the conditions my character would have experienced, I wanted to research the circumstances that led to the Christmas Pact, an event unlike any that would be seen again throughout the rest of the First World War.

The Christmas Pact was an event that should not have happened; yet an unofficial, temporary truce took place between the Allied forces and the Triple Entente's German forces in a section of the western front dubbed, "No Man's Land" (Brown 14). It was unlikely for such an occurrence because fraternization with the enemy, "was a court-martial offence, punishable on both sides," and, "both commands had warned against," it. (Weintraub 14, 7). Despite these warnings, in an area that, "took place over two-thirds of the sector of the Western Front held by the British Expeditionary Force," (Brown 13) the two opposing sides set aside their conflicts to celebrate a holiday together. However, a series of extraordinary events occurred around the time of the first Christmas of the War in 1914 that allowed this to happen.

It had been a bitter five months of fighting that had already resulted in thousands of deaths and a rejection of the initial romantic notions about war by the time of the first Christmas of World War I. There had been a staunch, “campaign of hatred and denunciation waged by the governments and the press, and endorsed by the peoples, of all the nations concerned” (Brown 13). But as the month of December 1914 progressed, these negative denunciations seemed to lighten, if but for a brief period of time.

By December 1914, the trench system was well in place with, “two parallel lines of trenches stretching between the North Sea coast to the Swiss border, from the Belgian seaside town of Nieuport to the French frontier town of Belfort,” which an English soldier affectionately called, “a great livid wound that lay across Europe” (Brown 35). Described by Otto Dix, a German expressionist artist, life in the trenches was miserable, wet, and cold as,

Lice, rats, barbed wire, fleas, shells, bombs, underground caves, corpses, blood, liquor, mice, cats, artillery, filth, bullets, mortars, fire, steel: that’s what war is. It is the work of the devil (Weintraub 2).

It was difficult but soldiers lived, often finding relief in the absurdity of their situation. One English soldier amusingly described an example of this,

I have come to the conclusion that this damned place is a sort of second Venice. When you find a piece of dry land you think there must be some mistake. I was up to my waist in water two or three days ago. I tried taking off my shoes and socks but struck a few empty meat tins and desisted. (Brown 16)

Trench life depicted a depressing environment for soldiers, which heightened the overall malaise that had descended on those who had been fighting since the beginning of the war.

By the time December arrived, there was a shift in mood. This was in part due to a large shipment of parcels that arrived as gifts for the soldiers from their countries. Over two million parcels were sent from England as care packages because if one wanted, “for fifteen shillings, an advertisement in British papers promised, one could send a soldier at the front a thousand gold flake cigarettes,” (Weintraub 10) as well as plum puddings, chocolates, butterscotches and more. It got to the point where there were so many parcels that rifleman Percy H. Jones wrote home, claiming, “I am keeping well, in spite of the large Christmas parcels received” (Weintraub 10). As a result, the surplus of parcels and no place to put them, “created some of the impetus for exchanges, often disproportionate ones, even with the enemy” (Weintraub 10).

The actual fraternization began well before Christmas. As early as December 2nd, Lieutenant General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien of the British army,

Wrote in his diary: Weird stories come in from the trenches about fraternizing with the Germans. They shout to each other and offer to exchange certain articles and give certain information. In one place, by arrangement, a bottle was put out between the trenches and then they held a competition as to which could break it first.

This was followed by other similar events all along the Western Front. Singing became an important factor for peaceful communication between both sides. Throughout the winter of 1914-1915, there were reports of, “impromptu concerts, singing patriotic and sentimental songs” (Brown 20). This occurred on both sides and, “on calm evenings the songs from one line floated to the trenches on the other side and were there received with applause and sometimes calls for an encore” (Brown 20).

Particularly on the afternoon of December 23rd, there were many instances of fraternization. In one case, German soldiers, risking their lives came across the battlefield and, while speaking English,

A ‘friendly exchange of cigars and verbal greetings,’ followed, and one of the Germans remarked, ‘that he hoped the war would end soon, as he wanted to return to his former job as a taxi-driver in Birmingham (Weintraub 14).

Another similar event occurred around the ruins of Messines monastery, which was almost halfway between Ypres and Lille.

After nightfall on the 23rd, ... Saxons from Leipzig began placing small Christmas trees on the parapets of their trenches, replete with candles affixed by clamps. Their sector was quiet. Lange, the equivalent to a British staff sergeant, watched Tommies crawl out of their trenches, curiosity rather than courage involved, to ask about the glittering trees, which had materialized, on the bare, blasted landscape (Weintraub 14).

This was followed by many other examples of tentative interactions between soldiers of the two warring factions. Christmas decorations, greetings, and singing started to occur to some degree all along the trenches. The environment was set for the Christmas Pact to come to fruition.

On Christmas Eve, although the air was still tense with the promise of a potential attack, both sides asked for time to celebrate instead of fight. This began when weather conditions improved enough that a light frost hardened the usually liquid mud beneath the trenches. This allowed for, if only temporarily, a respite from the usual miserable and wet conditions. It also inspired a jovial mood that allowed the two warring sides to engage in a “you no shoot, we no shoot” (Brown 29) agreement, that became so widespread, “no one was ever certain where and how it began” (Weintraub 21). This escalated to “Merry Christmas” signs and other instances of cease-fire all along the front. It appeared that while both sides were unsure if they believed their enemy

would celebrate the holiday, they both were willing enough to try. In a letter written to his family, Rifleman Graham Williams of the British army wrote of a particular event where

Suddenly lights began to appear along the German parapet, which were evidently makeshift Christmas trees, adorned with lighted candles, which burnt steadily in the still, frosty air! ... Then our opponents began to sing ‘Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht’ ... And so it went on. First the Germans would sing one of their carols and then we would sing one of ours, until we started singing ‘O Come all Ye Faithful’ the Germans immediately joined in singing the same hymn to the Latin words ‘Adeste Fideles’. And I thought, well, this was really a most extraordinary thing – two nations both singing the same carol in the middle of a war (Brown 29).

There were many other examples of such displays of holiday spirit between the two opposing forces. Although there were some areas where shells were still fired, even in those instances there was a sense of joy. The German Prince Wilhelm even wrote about visiting the troops near the Argonne region, claiming that despite shellfire earlier in the night, some soldiers had sung and, “thus, amid the bitter realities of trench warfare, with all its squalor, a Christmas song had worked a miracle and thrown a bridge from man to man” (Brown 65). However, the jovial spirit and camaraderie by the soldiers on Christmas Eve was amplified on Christmas Day.

On Christmas Day of 1914, mass fraternization occurred. On the 27th of December, Rifleman Tilley wrote to his parents, detailing the events from Christmas Day:

On Christmas morning as we had practically ceased to fire at them, one of them started beckoning to us so one of our Tommies went out in front of our trenches and met him halfway amidst cheering. After a bit a few of our chaps went out to meet theirs until literally hundreds of each side were out in No Man’s Land shaking hands and exchanging cigarettes, chocolate and tobacco, etc” (Brown 32).

These instances of camaraderie happened along almost all of the trench system. Soldiers interacting with their enemies, exchanging well wishes and gifts. There were even some instances of football games being played. It was an extraordinary chain of events, some that the

soldiers fighting in the War had never seen, and would likely not live to see again. But for that one brief moment, enemies became friends and shared a moment of peace with each other.

Reading these first hand accounts allowed me a deeper appreciation for the challenges these soldiers faced and how rare an event like the Christmas truce was. For my character, a British soldier, most likely from London who hears the German's sing *Stille Nacht*, I respond in kind by singing *Christmas Day in the Cookhouse*. Learning more about this event made me appreciate that in a moment such as the Christmas truce, singing was a vital way for the soldiers to communicate. It was safe, evoked a sense of comfort and united them with something that did not require a shared language. It was enough to unite enemies for a brief period of time. Due to how devastating the war would become, with a casualties list reaching the millions (White), this was a moment that demonstrated the absurdity of war. It gave these poor men a few fleeting moments of comfort with those who would be their enemies again on the following day. These images of trench life mixed with soldiers accounts of an almost childlike desire to play will help me to shape the character of the First Soldier.

b) Women in the British Workforce and the Third Girl

For my second thesis role, the Third Girl in *Oh What a Lovely War* I wanted to research the history of women in the workforce in Britain during the First World War, particularly those working in ammunition. For my character of the Third Girl, I work in munitions but I sing a song about my sister Susie, who sews shirts for soldiers. Therefore, it was important to learn more about the munitions and textiles industries in Britain at the time of the First World War.

A woman in the workforce was not widely accepted in British society until 1915. While many women did have to work to survive it was generally men in industrial jobs and women in the service and textiles. However, in May of 1915, “the new coalition government...set up a separate Ministry of Munitions which positively and directly encouraged the enrolment of women in munitions factories.” (Marwick 12) It was this event in addition to the withdrawal of men from the workforce following the introduction of the, “universal military conscription for men in May 1916” (Marwick 13) that allowed a much higher number of women to enter into a wider variety of positions that had not been previously available to them.

Recruitment for female munitions workers was one of the earliest government campaigns for war support, which eventually encouraged more women to enter the workforce. The Ministry of Munitions was responsible for taking, “over direct control of certain factories exclusively concerned with war production, it began to build its own State-owned factories,” to help when it was revealed that “British troops were being handicapped by a shortage of high explosives” (Marwick 51). But it was also due to the Ministry of Munitions’ ability to control, “trade union practices, which had sometimes served as a barrier to the employment of women, and it could directly encourage the recruitment of women” (Marwick 51). As a result, many more women found work.

However, munitions were not the only place where women worked in Britain. Before the outbreak of the First World War some of the oldest and, “most important trades for women [were] in domestic service, tailoring, and textiles” (Braybon 26). In fact, previous to the war, the women working in Lancashire as weavers, “were by this time the elite amongst women workers – and they knew it” (Braybon 28). They were the highest paid among female employees and to

some degree, had the highest level of respect, even though they would not make the same wage as their male counterparts. However, the textile business suffered from a shortage of workers when the Ministry of Munitions began recruiting and women moved into more lucrative munitions work” (Braybon 46).

The question was what did these women do primarily before the war. According to Braybon, it was, “estimated that over 200,000 women who went into industry during the war came from domestic service, and that many others had been outworkers, self-employed, or wives who had left work” (Braybon 48). While many of these women would change trades within an industry, it was a remarkable difference in what was acceptable for women to do as working individuals.

Perhaps one of the best resources of an example of the life factory worker came from the detailed autobiographical account of an educated female worker in Britain’s Women’s War Work committee papers. This unnamed author gave an example of what the working conditions were like. In her account of working at a new factory, she details,

Here conditions were very different from those I had left, though I felt the want of companions more than anything else. Cloakrooms were crowded, noisy, dirty, and worse than dirty; the yard was impassible and had to be bridged with planks; the tool room was close and badly lighted; the canteen was pandemonium; the food was unpalatable, (but that I ate it should say uneatable) and I could obtain no rooms nearer than twenty-five minutes walk, which made dinner at the canteen a necessity These hours are of course longer than those laid down for women in the Factory and Workshops Act but I was unaware of this at the time, and in any case I knew that women as a class were being sampled in me, not only for their work, but for their behavior, time-keeping, endurance and general adaptability ... My work was at first was the making of several drilling jigs; sets of extractors for presses; various repairing jobs; backing off cutters & co. and at the end of three weeks my spirit was broken and I was on the point of resigning my post.

This was partly because the work was far more difficult than any I had before attempted ... and more because of the general attitude of antagonism. Over and

over again the foreman gave me wrong or incomplete directions and altered them in such a way as to give me hours more work. I took this to be deliberate at the time, though I believe now that it was habitual bad management ... Two shop stewards informed me on the first day that they had no objection (!) to my working there provided I received the full men's rate of pay (1/3 an hour). But after this none of the men spoke to me for a long time, and would give me no help as to where to find things. My drawer was nailed up by the men, and oil was poured over everything in it through a crack another night. (Marwick 63)

Needless to say, after a few months, she resigned from this position. Although this was not the case with every factory, it gives a tangible example of how unpleasant working conditions could be.

The physical danger of working with explosives was also constantly present. In 1917, a building in Gretna housing, "several tones of nitro-glycerin suddenly disappeared in a lightning sheet of flame" while another serious, "explosion at Silvertown in East London in which a dozen women were killed" (Marwick 69). Many women also developed health problems from working with the harmful materials, including TNT including, "jaundice, circulatory, giddiness, hot and cold flushes, swelling, etc. drowsiness, loss of memory, disorder of sight delirium, coma and convulsions" (Marwick 68). This was also in addition to war conditions that required air raids and air raid warnings to often occur.

For me, this was incredibly helpful in understanding how to endow the Third Girl with an enormous sense of responsibility. Not only was she working with dangerous materials, but also the discriminatory conditions in which she worked were as impactful as the physical necessities of the work itself.

c) Joan Littlewood and *Oh What a Lovely War*

On the 24th of March 1963, in a review written about the original production of *Oh What a Lovely War*, Kenneth Tynan of the Observer wrote:

It seems to me quite likely that when the annals of our theatre in the middle years of the twentieth century come to be written, one name will lead all the rest: that of Joan Littlewood. Others write plays, direct them or act in them: Miss Littlewood alone "makes theatre". (Tynan)

These were bold words for an even bolder playwright. Littlewood's piece was created collectively with members of her theatre company that resulted in an incendiary piece of theatre. Tynan went on to write that, "The production brings off a double coup: it is revolutionary alike in content and form. And even those who mistrust revolution can hardly deny that it has the most memorable score in London" (Tynan). The decision to use original war songs performed without a sense of saccharine sentimentality throughout the First World War particularly struck a chord because it made an authentic connection to history.

Littlewood herself recognized the importance of having the music from World War I tell the story and to create the work from the vision of a group of artists. In her autobiography, Littlewood details a conversation with her husband in the early stages of creating *Oh What a Lovely War*, "Why not let the songs tell the story? I said at last. You could preface them with news clips to put them in context. We could add period dances or cartoon sketches here and there" (Littlewood 674). It would eventually become a play constructed by the cast under the direction of Littlewood and it was this ensemble creation process that gave the play its distinct feeling. Tynan wrote, "You feel that her actors have a common attitude towards more than acting, a shared vision that extends to life in general; it is thus, rather than by any rehearsal method or technique of staging, that true theatrical style is born" (Tynan).

The music is also important because it is a different way to understand what the play is trying to communicate. Because each song within the play was written for a specific event or theme within the War the songs are not just for exposition but are individual pieces of history. It helped me to appreciate the impact that the play had on its audience because the War songs existed before the play itself. In a conversation Littlewood had with a frustrated actress who was upset and felt lost that the story could not be told in a straightforward manner, Littlewood simply responded, “If we don’t get lost, we’ll never find a new route” (Littlewood 683). For me, that means that instead of trying to intellectualize this process, first I am going to have to get a little lost in the music.

Chapter Seven: Rehearsal Plan

My plan to approach the two characters the First Soldier and Third Girl from *Oh What a Lovely War* will have both a physical and mental approach, the only difference being what comes first for each character. For the First Soldier I will have a primarily physical approach first. Exploring character building and movement in Erika Batdorf's movement class in the MFA theatre program at York University as well as through some character creation exercises by Moni Yakim will provide the foundation on which I plan to build the character of the First Soldier. Starting with composition, deciding how the character stands, where his feet point, what angle they walk at, where his knees point, how his pelvis moves, where his spine bends, where his chest retreats, plus his relationship between shoulders, neck and jaw. I will find ten different physical gestures this character uses to physically express himself and then put him up on his feet and see how he moves. How does he walk when he is relaxed, how he walks when he is in a hurry? How does he dance? Where does he hold tension? How do the various physical traumas he's experienced influence how he moves? Next, I will do various physical character building exercises suggested by Moni Yakim, the current head of the movement department at the Juilliard Drama school, in his book *Creating Character*. Particularly, I would like to complete three exercises for building character, exploring my character as an element, as an animal and as a man-made object. The idea would be to first find elements of that exploration (element, animal or man-made object) and then see how to personalize some aspect of them within my character. I will combine these two approaches, allowing the physical reality of the character to come to fruition. After the character feels somewhat constructed, and some choices made from those informed explorations only then will I explore the psychological aspects of the character and fill in the rest of the details.

For the Third Girl, I will approach the character psychologically first. I will analyze the text and then answer the twenty-six questions I received from Paul Lampert's acting class to build the character's life history. I will then answer whatever was left unanswered from Uta Hagen's nine questions. After that, I will determine what archetype I think my character identifies with personally. I will then determine what my inner, private objective is versus my outer, public objective and what I hope to affect in the other characters in the scene. After this is explored on paper, then I will get her on her feet and make physical choices based on the character traits I have explored through writing and text analysis.

The goal will be to determine if one approach works better for me than the other. I expect that each character will have a different required approach but what I want to find out is whether a physical first or psychological first approach is a better fit for how I approach constructing a character. What I hope to find is a fully embodied character, one that feels at home within a different body, communicates with gesture that are unlike my own and is authentically connected and emotionally expressive.

Chapter Eight: Warm-up

Another important aspect of my rehearsal plan will be to have a more structured warm-up. One thing I realized in Erika Batdorf's class is that I did not have a structured warm-up. In fact, I was mostly confused on how to warm-up. That being said, with the help of the exercises done in her class as well as components learned from voice class with David Smukler at York University as well as some movement work inspired by the faculty at the Voice Intensive, I plan to construct a warm-up that will be one quarter physical, one quarter vocal, one quarter awareness and one quarter personal inventory.

a) Physical

For the physical component, I will do a series of physical stretches and movement assembled from Yoga and movement classes with Erika Batdorf to rid my body of superfluous tension. I will employ some Syntonics exercises I learned from Judith Koltai's movement class at the Voice Intensive to find breath centering and awareness of body alignment. I will also approach the physical warm-up by not ignoring what emotional state I am in when I enter the rehearsal room but instead allowing that to inspire what type of physical movement I require, i.e. Starting with a run versus starting with stretching. As Stephen Wangh writes in *Acrobat of the Heart*,

You may begin by exercising one or another part of your body, and then, realizing that your thoughts are elsewhere, follow those thoughts as they lead you to another physical concentration. Or perhaps you start by simply moving around the space, sensing how your body feels as it moves through different spaces, and letting yourself ask, "what do I need now?" (Wangh 28)

This would be to physically warm up but to also to wake up the communication between body and mind. Then, finding a piece of music that I believe my character would enjoy, explore the

sensory awareness that comes with dancing. I love dancing and I find music to be a way into character.

b) Voice

For the vocal component, I will use the Linklater vocal technique to warm up my body, voice and resonators to allow free breath movement and authentic resonance. I will employ the warm-up exercises explored in David Smukler's voice class as well as with the faculty at the Voice Intensive.

c) Awareness

For the self-awareness, I want to include an exercise that we explored in Erika Batdorf's movement class, which consisted of walking on a rope on a ground. Doing this exercise was extremely helpful for me because it immediately brought me into conflict with my inner control freak. I found that the more I tried to control my actions while walking along an extended piece of rope the angrier I got when I found myself losing balance. It was only when I surrendered to the idea of not being able to control the situation at all and connected with my breath that I was able to maintain my balance. It is a quick exercise to make me present and heighten the communication and awareness of my body.

d) Personal Inventory

For the personal inventory, I will employ a technique by Eric Morris, author of *No Acting Please*, an acting text that has many exercises that, “explores the being state, wherein the actor learns to do no more or less than he feels” (Morris, Books). Ideally, before each rehearsal I will do a quick personal inventory (two to five minutes). The personal inventory “is a stream-of-consciousness monologue, which you do semi-audibly, so that you can hear yourself talking, but no one else can. You ask yourself, “How do I feel?” and then you express your feelings and continue to repeat the question” (Morris, *No Acting Please* 18). The goal is to identify the specifics of what emotional and mental state I will be entering the rehearsal or performance space in. The next step would be to,

Then find out how you want to feel by identifying the obligation in the material. The obligation is that emotional life that you want to experience ... Find out specifically how you want to feel in that relationship and then find out where you are in your present moment-to-moment life. Then you will have some ideas about what you can do to go from one state of being to another. (Morris, *No Acting Please* 94).

The goal of this would be to find the bridge from my personal state of being into the character’s state of being and to rid some tension along the way.

Chapter Nine: Positive affirmations

To take care of myself through the rehearsal process, I decided I would do a daily affirmation. No matter how I felt the rehearsal or performance went I would list three things that I considered to be a success. In order to do this I needed to create five criteria on how to measure success for myself: the first I included was breath connection and voice work to determine if I was grounded and had a good sense of breath throughout the rehearsal or performance; presence, if I was able to stay in the moment, embodied physically within my character; level of perfectionism, to see if I was letting negative self-talk get in the way of the work and to what degree; the next being authentic emotional connection, to see if I was able to genuinely be in an emotional state required of the character; and lastly, play, to see how much freedom or pleasure I could derive from the work instead of having it be just work. Each entry may not include all of these measures but they would provide a structure of how to assess myself in a positive and technical way.

The hope is that with the creation of this warm-up plan that I will be able to prepare myself for the rehearsal and performance process in a way that is more nurturing and will lead to an embodied method. To create a new approach for a physical, vocal warm-up as well as include an attention to physical and emotional awareness and positive affirmations will be an active way to have a positive relationship to my work as well as my personal self.

Chapter Ten: Rehearsal and Performance Journal Excerpts

Rehearsal 11/18/14

We had our reading today of OWALW in front of all of the first years and everyone who was involved with the show. I had no idea it was going to be such a big production. I'm almost glad in a way though because it forced me to focus in and quiet out everything else. Sitting on the chair, I aligned myself and focused on my breath alignment to battle the anxiety that reared up. Since we were sitting down it was easy to feel when I was out. I also got some clues for my various characters in terms of how they would sit and would find the ways of how I would slip out of them and come back into my body. I found especially for my Aide character that she likes to make herself small, knees tucked in, chin tucked in because her boss is so big. I believe her intention will be to be invisible so she doesn't get in trouble with her boss.

Rehearsal 11/19/14

Today was just a fun day. We blocked the Drill Sergeant scene, which at the moment appears to be mostly game playing. I was a little frustrated because I had to run errands during my dinner break so by the time I got to the studio I only had ten minutes. I did a personal inventory and since I didn't have the time to do a full body/voice warm-up, I made a spontaneous choice, threw on a pair of earphones and danced to some music. And boy am I glad I did. I realized that there is nothing quite like a quick dance session to a good song, in this case "None of Your Business" by Salt N' Pepa, that can get me into my body. I always forget that sometimes the most effective kind of warm-up isn't the longest and most choreographed. Sometimes a good song with a strong message and a strong beat can be enough to get you into the moment. It was also great physically

because it got my heart rate up fast and in the way warm-ups can sometimes feel like an obligatory movement, dancing never feels that way to me. Dancing gets my body awake, electric and it makes me feel like I can move it in any way instead of being afraid of my limitations. When I dance, I feel like I have no limitations. I want to incorporate more dancing into my warm-ups, especially if I don't have a lot of time. After, my pelvis felt so loose and I just felt happier and more excited to be there.

Luckily though, as an added bonus, we found out Soo would be leading a warm-up. I love when Soo leads a warm-up because she has such a sense of being in her body that being around her while she moves helps ground me, which will be important to keep in mind later in the run. Just like you would get energy from your classmates doing Suzuki work in movement class last year, you get grounded from your fellow scene mates.

After the warm-up we went into blocking the scene, which is pretty physical. The whole play is physical and while I'm fairly out of shape playing yesterday made me realize I'm stronger than I think I am. I'm definitely not where I was before and it's that progress that I have to keep in mind. And if I accept it as fun then it is easier to do.

Rehearsal 11/20/14

Today we worked on the Waterloo station scene. It was awesome! Autumn gave us an idea of what she wanted – injured soldiers, blindfold, and all that jazz. I'll be coming right out of playing French's aide and it will have to transition the changes of character on stage. It's so great to have the opportunity to explore something I like, especially since with this play there is less

opportunity for depth of character as it is more about stepping from one character to another rather than making them fully fleshed out people, one life to another and finding what those triggers are to fully embody those lives. There's only a breath from one to the other so I made the choice that Henry St. James (The First Officer) would have to have a serious injury to be sent home. I decided that he had eye damage from a gas attack and that some shrapnel in the abdomen – an injury that was then debrided – meaning the surrounding tissue was removed to prevent infection, had waylaid him. These gave me things to connect to physically and will ground me in playing Henry; will give weight to everything he says and how he moves.

Rehearsal 11/21/14

We got to play with George today! We got into the Christmas truce scene and we finally got to play with the First Soldier (George Fitzmorris). All the exploration of George that I have been doing so far, especially in Erika's class has been very dark, exploring the nasty aspects of war, survival, violence, injury, and death. But in this exploration, putting him on his feet for the first time and putting the text up made me realize how light and playful George is! He's so playful! The things he says, how others see him, of course he's playful!

It was just so much fun to put him into the world and interact with all the others around him.

With where Autumn blocked us, the only thing that sucks is that I can't move around that much. We'll be in the audience, surrounded by members of the audience and it's as if we're to be in the trenches so that immediately limits the physical action that I can do. I tried to push my boundaries with Autumn to see if I could do more but she seems pretty set on how she wants it

staged so I have to figure out a balance between what I wanted to do and what I can do. Regardless, it felt wonderful to get him on his feet in his world.

Rehearsal 11/26/14

We rehearsed the Gassing scene for the first time today. We also sang with Sam and learned more songs. It really hit me today to see how many songs we actually have to sing through out the course of the play – it's a lot! I'm not sure how I feel about it – only because I have concerns in terms of how we are telling this story, hopefully in a way that makes sense in a grounded way. I'm concerned because it appears that there isn't a vested interest in doing a proper singing warm-up and my voice gets tired by the end of a night of singing without having warmed up my pipes by singing scales. I suppose that it's something I'll have to start including in my own warm-up.

We do some group choral work with Sam, which I think is a great way to unify our voices/sound as a group. We match tones and explore sounds together, which is interesting for us to communicate as an ensemble but I wonder if our time spent with Sam is to get a feel for the music or to find out why we're singing that song in the first place. I suppose I'm feeling a lack of control, which is why I feel a little anxious. But I suppose the best thing to do is if we're not doing it in a group than I can damn well do it on my own.

Rehearsal 12/10/14

Today was interesting for two reasons. The first being that we had conferences all day along with rehearsal. The second was that I got an intriguing idea from Soo.

Conferences gave me some interesting ideas to incorporate into this show. Primarily from Erika's points that she believed I should absolutely continue to study animals and take hip-hop, Latin and African dances. This only solidifies for me to continue to incorporate dancing into my warm-ups. She also mentioned that I could do more work with eyes as well as more breath, feet and connection to my low body. These are all things I would definitely love to incorporate with my First Soldier – George. I will continue to explore the meerkat eyes movements, especially for the Christmas truce scene. One thing I particularly loved that she mentioned is that I should demand to be taken seriously as a physical being, which I believe ties into my thesis and the challenge of embodiment quite nicely.

David mentioned how my journey from a student at the back of the class to one of the vocal leaders was impressive, which was awesome to hear. He mentioned that I should keep asking myself how dangerous I could be for the other people in the room. Which I love! I think a lot of the work I started at first was very polite. If I were in a scene, I wouldn't necessarily push it if I didn't believe it. But what I'm realizing is that doesn't serve anyone. I think rehearsal process is becoming a place to touch those emotional states of being so that they become somewhat familiar instead of alarming for the first time during performance. I would be nervous doing a show if I didn't incorporate touching those emotional places fully during rehearsal. Then try adding those foreign demanding emotional states along with onstage anxiety and boom! Recipe

for disaster. But if I continue to be dangerous and hold nothing back throughout the rehearsal process than after a while these states are less threatening and it is more interesting to see what I get in return from my scene-mates.

The great idea I got from Soo was to incorporate a through-line for one of my characters so that they follow a journey from start to finish. So that's what I've decided! I'm going to apply George as my factory worker/soldier. He'll be the one I travel through the show with from going to work in the factory off the top to every time I'm in the trenches or singing songs as the factory worker to finishing the play with him. This will give me a chance to play with embodiment over a longer period of time and really give me a perspective to commit to throughout the show instead of taking it one scene at a time. That is what I originally hoped I would get with my thesis role so it's awesome to see that I'd be able find a way to do so on my own. I'm especially excited because now I can take the Christmas break to develop his story line throughout the play.

Rehearsal 01/08/15

It's been really difficult to come back into the space and stay fully hooked up to the characters. Being on deck has changed a few things and tensions in the room have prevented a certain deepening of the work. I'm often feeling confused if what I'm doing is the correct action, if what I'm about to do is right, am I coming from the right place, am I hitting the right cues? It is frustrating because I think this state of constant confusion is putting space between where I am in my own work and where I think I should be at this point. More importantly, the confusion is putting me up in my head.

The solace that I did have today is that I got to work with the new choices I made for Molly's (the Third Girl) scene after doing more detailed text work for her over the break. I read an interview with Marion Cotillard about her process for scenes that are particularly demanding. She spoke of her work on the film, *Two Days, One Night*, stating, "I wrote her life before. I wrote scenes I would use later when I needed some support to be able to burst into tears out of nowhere. I needed to build a structure of stories that I could use when I needed to reach this or that emotion." (Smart). So that is ultimately what I did. I wrote of Molly's life prior to the war and her husband and their life together. What I came up with, which was particularly helpful today, was the chain of thoughts that Molly has in the time between the text and the moment she first sees the soldier who gives her the letter.

I found that if I focused on the scenario I would easily fall into either melodramatics or playing the ending of the scene. So I decided to think about what would make Molly happy in that moment. I thought of my husband, Jimmy who was away fighting on the western front, of our life together and of his writing to me in a letter saying that whenever he hears *Keep the Home Fires Burning* playing on the radio he thinks of me. Of his bet with me that I wouldn't be able to knit an entire sweater for him before he returned from the war. Of what we would do when he first got back, which included a trip to the beach to run on the sand together again. Of the children he promised to make with me once he returned. Of the little boy who would bear his mop of curly hair and bright clover-green eyes and my round-cheeked smile. Of the future life he promised to build with me.

Then at that moment when I first see the feet of the soldier come into my vision I am confused because it is so out of place to see those boots on my front porch. Then to look up and see this

soldier. And recognize who he is and what his purpose is. To then look down to his hand that holds the slip of paper that has the power to take everything I cared about most in this world away from me. And I reach out before I realize what I am doing and my skin touches the paper and suddenly it is real. Jimmy is gone. And all I can hear is him whispering what he would tell me every night as we would fall into bed together and imploding with the knowledge that I would never hear him say it again: “Come into my arms, dear heart.”

I found that having these memories to sift through made the devastation of the sudden shift at the end of the scene that much more heartbreaking. If the last thoughts of him that Molly had were happy ones, hopeful ones, the fall she has to experience is that much greater. Even though she knows the news could possibly come at any moment, the fact that it is suddenly here is enough to cause her very foundation to crumble beneath her. It also forces me as an actor to become so present, so keenly aware of the situation that I block everything else out other than this one person standing in front of me - the soldier with the look of pity and grim determination in his eyes. He understands the gravity of what he reveals and it is one of those rare life moments when I am thrust into having a thoroughly intimate moment with a complete stranger, knowing that he will be the only other person on the planet who understands what this moment feels like. Luckily the look Corey gives me is so rife with information that it is not hard to go where I need to, especially after sifting through all those memories before I see him.

I'm still having trouble in giving her a physical presence but I think because the given circumstances of the scene are so large, her physical actions do not need to be. I think she is actually a little more timid than I have been playing her before. I think I'd like to play with her being more day-dreamy in the future with soft, subtle movements.

Rehearsal 01/15/15

This was by far the hardest day we've had so far. Even coming into the space you could sense how tired everyone was. It didn't help that when we began marking the beginning, Autumn threw another huge change at us by bringing more counts in *Jerusalem*. The issue for me is we made it based on counts on top of marching, on top of singing, on top of committing to an intention to a scene that has not been consistently the same and continues to change even a week prior to performances that I blew past my threshold. I lost it. I can't/couldn't take any more changes, especially when they keep being inconsistent. It seems like every time someone makes a suggestion for a change, it's taken with little to no consideration on whether it is consistent with what was happening before. The changes keep contradicting one another and it's reaching the point where we are too overwhelmed to let anything settle in. For physical embodiment, it is a challenge. I feel as if my body is always in a state of confusion because if you can't let things settle into muscle memory, the struggle for full embodiment is real! I'm realizing that I have no control over what happens in rehearsal. And the anxiety that this is causing me, because it feels out of control, is also making me realize that I need to focus on what I can do in my warm-ups. If I feel anxious, I must spend more time focusing on my body and releasing the tension in a physical way. The physical tension was so strong when I woke up today it felt like I had a soldier injury because I was so tense. I can't keep doing it like this. I'm going to spend extra time warming up so I can at least take care of myself that way. All I can hope for is that no other major changes come again or I'm not sure how much more the cast can take.

Monday Preview 01/19/15

It was an interesting show because as much went wrong, there were also aspects of things that went right. A benefit I discovered was that in walking the long way around to the entrance of the carp shop, it allows the moment you walk into the carp shop to be the moment of transformation. As soon as I stepped into the room, George took over. I transitioned from actor to character walking through that doorway and inhabited the space in the carp shop as George so that even before the play began, I felt at home in his body.

Another aspect that was interesting was that seeing Erika in the audience was amazing because it immediately reminded me of blood, breath, gravity and it was if the piece of me in her movement class came alive with me on stage, similar to having David with me the other night in the audience, suddenly reminding me to breathe into my back ribs.

The reminder of blood, breath, gravity is becoming so vital to me, especially in the moments where things don't go right. For example, I keep messing up the lyrics in *Cookhouse* and in those moments, I panic. But the times I can bring in blood, breath and gravity awareness, I go out of my head and back into my body and ultimately into my character.

There has also been the amazing discovery of how being able to settle into the thoughts of my characters throughout the scenes instead of panicked thinking, "am I in the right spot at the right time, saying the right thing?" I think this is in part due to finding the right groove of the show after enough runs that muscle memory is kicking in and also due to my warm-up today. I really took the time to focus on my body tension and even incorporated more of the emotional

connection work from Erika's class. Stretch-yawning and rolling around on the floor and allowing myself to go to the emotional places I needed to release reminded me of the advice she gave me to touch the emotional places you have in the show – something I wanted to incorporate for my warm-up but not giving it priority.

Opening Night 01/21/15

It was an interesting show. It began with a sense of being in it but not really in it. It seemed as if for the first 20 minutes of the show I couldn't get into my body or into my character's thoughts. It felt pushed instead of settled. Although I did take the time to finally check in with blood, breath, gravity in the German Businessman scene, the rest of the first half of the play seemed to run better for me, more alive, more connected particularly starting around the Waterloo train station scene and the Christmas truce scene. Only thing is I fell funny on my knee during the Drill Sergeant scene in a way that I could tell did not make my knee happy but not bad enough to make me have to stop.

I took Neil's suggestion of coming up with more specific images for *Cookhouse*. I realized that since we never worked that song as a group with Sam that I never really had the opportunity to chat it out with a group with as much detail that I needed. I realized I had to give myself my own journey with it. And it worked! I didn't screw up the lyrics and I think it was a moment the audience connected with. It also just allowed me to have fun with it! For the second half I've realized that one important thing I've incorporated is listening to a song by *The Lone Below*, called "2 Sides of Lonely" (Bellow). I listened to it on repeat when I was working on text work for Molly (the Third Girl) and so when I listened to it, the song itself and the context of the lyrics

immediately put me in that emotional place I needed for the letter scene with Corey, in a more connected and visceral way. I could feel the grief live in my diaphragm so I would remember that physical feeling along with other images during my warm-up and then touch that place again during performance. It manifests in a strong feeling that if I breathe into it I can carry that accessibility throughout all of Act 2.

I've also realized what a difference a well warmed-up body does for my anxiety and tension. If I'm well warmed up then the tension can't or at least has a harder time manifesting itself physically. If the body feels good, the brain feels good.

While judgment does not seem to be shut down by blood, breath, gravity it does release tension in my body. It appears that investing in the relationships to my scene partners gives me clarity of emotional being through focusing on how I feel about them in any given moment.

Wednesday Evening Performance 01/22/15

Today in general has kind of sucked. I woke up this morning with my knee so stiff I could barely stand on it and I scrambled to make an emergency appointment with my physiotherapist. Turns out I have a level 1 sprain in my MCL, a ligament on the inside of my kneecap. So all the work of embodiment and being able to stay authentically, emotionally connected was all of a sudden thwarted by an injury that would remind me that I could not do what I did before without an adjustment. It felt like all of a sudden I was getting another direction to change everything I had to do in the show. Everything became harder, the running, the marching, and the stomping. It made me so furious that after being able to keep up with everything physically that I had this,

this stupid injury slowing me down. Luckily the physiotherapist taped me up like I was an athlete and then did an ultrasonic treatment that made it feel great for a while so at least I was a little more mobile than I had been during the matinee performance. But it's hard. All the physicality I had planned for, the body and shapes I had created all of a sudden had to change to take the pressure off of my knee. And forget being able to stand fully aligned for the catch-up moments off-stage. Suddenly I couldn't balance my weight evenly on both legs. So now I have a bum right knee, a sore and tight left hip from having to put all my weight on it and a back filled with knots as a result. While I did try to put extra time in for stretching before the show to alleviate the pain it just doesn't feel the same and I know it. I think I have to just take the time to accept and even grieve what I won't be able to do for the rest of the run and find ways to make adjustments that will still give me a sense of grounding and alignment.

Closing 01/24/15

I learned something important today. Today was the day my family came, my parent's cousins and friends of the family. I asked them to come to the last show on purpose. I found that traditionally anytime my parents have come to a show of mine, my anxiety tends to get the best of me and I somehow end up screwing up. I thought that it was due to the fact that my family would usually come on opening night or fairly early into the run when I would screw up. I would assume it's because I was not ready or as fully prepared as I should be. Then I would receive their feedback, which was often very truthful and while I tried to take it as helpful, it would often throw me into my self-critical head. So this time around I asked for them to wait until the last show. I also asked anyone who I knew to not give me feedback until the end of the run. This was a form of self-protection I wanted to try out so that I would not be distracted by the opinions of

others or let their feedback derail me from what I was exploring on stage. I think for me, this was a very helpful tactic because it allowed me to focus on the work instead.

So today being the closing show, they finally came. And yes, at one point I flubbed a line. However, what I realized was that while yes, having my parents in the audience does make me more nervous it also does not mean that I was any less prepared or worked any less. I had gone through many performances and rehearsals previously where I did not flub those lines. I knew the lines. I let my anxiety get in the way. To me, now I know that it does not mean that I'm not good, it just means that my family is a trigger for me and that I can do other things like devote more time to my warm-up to help cope with the added anxiety of family members being in the audience.

Overall I think the run of the show has gone well. Sure the knee sprain threw a wrench in my plan but the best part about it was that every night I felt like an active participant whether I was working with a commitment to a beginner's mind, blood, breath and gravity, or sensory exploration. Every evening presented its own challenges, depending on what was going on for me mentally or physically, one of the most important things I learned was that you have to approach each day individually. I could not pre-determine what I would need on any given day, where I would need to devote extra time to stretching or sensory awareness or dancing or fun.

It also sucks that it feels that it has only been in the last few days that I feel that the work has really started to settle in. It is only recently, maybe within the last 3 performances, where I felt that I did not have to worry about remembering lines or being where I was supposed to be. It got to the point where I would say what I had to next without having to pre-say the line in my head.

It kind of sucks realizing that this feeling had come this late into the game but I also realized today that there was no other time it could have happened, considering how often things changed. But the bottom line was that it eventually did settle in so that the thoughts that I could focus on within the action were those of my characters and that I could react on impulse.

But most importantly, it was the aspect of saying goodbye to the show during the run today that helped ground me in particular moments. I knew that it would be the last time I would be saying those lines or performing that scene. Today the Molly scene really worked because I really had to say goodbye to something. I was saying goodbye to the images I had taken in for her research, the images of family saying goodbye to their loved ones, funerals where flags of the fallen were given to those they left behind. I was grieving along with them.

Chapter Eleven: Conclusion

a) Approach to Finding the Character

I initially set out a tall order for my rehearsal plan and I believe the thing that I have gleaned to be most helpful after the run of the show is to keep it simple. I believed that the more I chose to do, the more data I would have to analyze to sift out what worked and what did not. I piled on too much instead of choosing a few things to really focus on and develop. Ultimately, that is what I ended up having to do.

The things that definitely worked included my various approaches to my two thesis characters. I found different reasons for each to be helpful. For George (the First Soldier) by creating his body first, I found immediate results from his gestures and movements. Because I had his body to explore in, it immediately gave me a context and perspective within the scene. Paired with the text, it gave me an idea of how to react to the given circumstances. This helped inform what my actions would be and how they would look. This was especially useful in the early stages of rehearsal when I would be unsure of what the blocking was or where the scene would be going. Even in those moments, I had George's body to play around in.

The tricky aspect of this however was that I did not do as much detailed homework as I did for my Molly Suffolk character (the Third Girl). While I did the basics, (intention, obstacles, tactics, given circumstances) I did not go much further into detail on paper unless it was in response to a physical exploration that I did as George (the First Soldier). I found that this was much more effective at the start but toward the end and especially during the run, it only lasted so long

before the lack of detail began to affect my acting work. I did not necessarily have the detail to hold onto in the moments when physical embodiment was not as connected or my anxious perfectionist voice became louder. This especially became more apparent after I injured myself opening night. All of a sudden I could not apply the choices I had made for his stance or his habits because my injury got in the way. Without that physical connection it suddenly became much harder to stay connected to him because it suddenly did not feel like his body. It felt like my body with an injury. Suddenly it was harder to react like he would, to have the thoughts he did because I could no longer stand comfortably in the body I created for him. For a few performances I felt a little lost with him and I felt as if I was just going through the motions trying not to hurt myself further. Because I did not have the extra details to hold onto like I did with Molly's character I found myself drifting while I was playing George, not necessarily within the scene but definitely when I was standing off stage as him.

Inversely, the struggle with my Molly character was that I did the text work first and it took me a while before I found the connection to her physical embodiment. Throughout rehearsals it felt much harder to get an idea of her physical self but it was much easier to connect to her emotional states of being. I developed a detailed backstory for her that gave her life shape and in turn, allowed me to connect to the emotional aspects of the scene with much less obtrusion than with George's scenes. Because I clearly knew the roadmap of Molly's thoughts it was much simpler to enter her psyche, especially when the injury occurred, knowing that I had a wealth of material from which to pull. With Molly I felt that I did not have as strong a connection to her physical being but I knew who she was and why she thought or acted the way she did. I made smaller, less obvious choices for her physical being as a result but I did not feel as at home in her body as I did in George's.

I may have been overly ambitious when I stated that I wanted to answer the 26 questions along with Uta Hagen's 9 questions. I found that once I answered the 26 questions, answering the 9 questions seemed redundant or extra work for something that would be covered with the text work I had already done. So I decided that the 26 questions were comprehensive enough for me.

The result of my investigation in *Oh What a Lovely War* is that I believe that I have to equal the amount of physical exploration with written homework to create a realistic and embodied character. In the future, the approach will have to be whatever works best for the type of character I have to play. If it is a character that demands a large physical being or presence I think I will have to introduce a physical exploration much earlier in the process of creating a character than I did in the past, before *Oh What a Lovely War*. If it is a character that needs more psychological exploration then I will have to approach the text homework first before exploring the physical manifestation of that character. However, I realized that the most important thing that must be done at the beginning is to pour over the text, figure out what my intentions, obstacles and given circumstances are in order to make and justify any choice, physical or psychological.

b) Warm Up

My warm-up plan was also something that changed and evolved as time went on. At first during rehearsal I found that because we were still in classes, I often did not have the desired amount of time to do a full warm-up. At most I would have 15-30 minutes. That meant right away that I had to find a condensed version of what I had planned to do. It also meant that the first thing I had to

do for every warm-up was lie down and take a moment to scan my body for tension and ask myself what it was I needed. More often than not, if I had a voice class that day, I was warmed up vocally and would need just a quick check in. For my physical warm-up I often danced because it was a quick and fun way to get my heart rate up as well as work out a lot of tension in my body. For the condensed amount of time I had, this dancing worked the best. If I had an extended period of time then I would take the time and do a whole body stretch, complete with a few stretch-yawns and organic body twists to make sure I felt connected to my body.

As for the personal inventory, I found that I did not have to do this everyday. That being said, this exercise was particularly helpful on the days I felt anxious, stressed or overwhelmed. Then simply saying the feelings out loud helped to lessen the magnitude of those emotions as if I was taking away their power by calling them out. To then make the connection to the emotional state of being required for my character was also helpful. It allowed me to bridge where I was emotionally to where my character needed to be and channel whatever I was feeling into an active state for my character. This was particularly helpful on the last few days of rehearsal when I felt the height of my anxiety. I was not sleeping well, waking up early with nothing but thoughts of the play and anxiety about where I was, what I was supposed to be doing or singing the songs from the play in my head. On those days, I would come in and do the inventory part of my warm-up. It did not always work as well as I liked but it definitely did help lessen my anxiety. I also made a point to ask my colleagues about how they dealt with their performance anxiety. I found the more we all talked about it together, the more we were able to invest in our relationships with each other because we all had anxiety about being on stage. Often, just naming the feeling to others was enough to take away its power over me.

The thing that was least helpful to me was the walk-the-rope exercise I found from Erika's class. It was tricky to haul a jump rope around with me and I often did not use it. If I found I was having a particularly self-critical day I would use it but more often than not it felt like a chore. As a result, I ended up incorporating more syntonics and dancing instead as this was a fun way to put me into contact with my body and to quiet my internal perfectionist voice. It was another way to express what I was going through as well as physically work out my anxiety.

The personal affirmations are an exercise I will most likely continue after this program. The good thing about integrating that exercise was that no matter how bad a day of rehearsal or performance was, I was always able to keep perspective. It changed how I framed my thinking because I knew at the end of the day that I had to find something positive to write about so I was constantly searching for positives throughout the day. It made me focus more on the positives than harp on the negatives, which was a nice change of perspective. Even if my inner perfectionist wanted to nag on whatever went wrong, I had to counter with a positive that would minimize the significance of the wrongs that had occurred.

The last thing that I realized throughout the rehearsal process was that I also needed to concentrate on a cool-down process post rehearsal or performance. I never gave much thought to what I would need after a rehearsal or performance but after doing a show this physical and having many anxiety-filled days wreak havoc on my body, I realized that when I got home after a day's work, I needed to pay some attention to myself. That is when the syntonics work really became crucial for me. I would often work with a ball, placing it under my pelvis or shoulder carriage and lie down, using the Alexander technique taught to us by Gwen Dobie in our first semester of movement to focus on releasing specific points of tension in my body. This was

important to do; especially after a day's work and before going to sleep so it would work out whatever tension I had gained during the day instead of fermenting it overnight. The days I did this, particularly during the performance period after I injured myself really assisted in a more cohesive warm-up and cool-down procedure to make sure I was taking care of myself physically and as an added bonus, mentally as well. The less tension I felt physically, the less anxious I felt mentally.

Overall, I think my approach, research and methodology was a huge success. I set out to gain confidence as an actor but what I gained was a deeper understanding of my body and a way to maintain a positive perspective throughout my work in a production. I found skills and tools to give me an active way to warm-up, cool-down, do research and keep a positive perspective on the work I do. It was not an easy challenge I set out for myself but to compare where I am now to where I was when I started was incredible to witness. There is still work to be done, to really hone in on what is ideal for me as an artist. The results that I have achieved through this work and research have definitely created change in me personally that I will carry forward for the rest of my life.

Chapter Twelve: Addendum

a) Character Explorations and Text Work Excerpts

i) The character of George Fitzmorris Element exploration Oct 24th, 2014

Started low to the ground, imagining as if George was on a battlefield somewhere in rural France. But first I let the darkness engulf me internally. It moved, slithered quick as smoke first taking my feet, then legs, then up through the loops of my pelvis, up through my ribs, shooting even faster down my arms, slowly through my neck and even more slowly up the back of my skull, around my jaw so that the last thing to see was my eyes – and then they were covered in the inky blackness. It was a quick moving darkness, fast like an avalanche and then slows like meandering molasses.

I became George, stuck in a battlefield swallowed by the dark of night. Afraid, afraid, afraid of what lay in an indistinguishable darkness all around me. Every loud sound I heard was as loud as a bomb; every sound I made was a cacophony that threatened at least my safety, at most my life. I moved fast and slow, low to the ground, so cautious of the noise I made. I would move like smoke, sideways, forward, rolling, shooting up, sliding down, and fighting to stay hidden from the potential dangers all around me.

Then I embraced the darkness. It gave me power, if kept me safe. I moved cautiously not out of fear, but almost as if I hunted. The darkness gave me what I needed to find my prey. But I treated it respectfully, not tempting fate but appreciating whatever advantage the black gave me. If I

found myself vulnerable, I moved slowly, exposing one limb at a time. Then fast, lickety-split playing the darkness all around and the darkness within me until there was no differentiation. Then I was in the trenches. Waiting. Sniffing at the mulch below me, leaning on a mound of dirt, against a wooden panel, waiting. Always waiting. Trying to sleep. Comforted only by the darkness. Nighttime meant safety, meant comfort. But I can't sleep because I'm waiting for the next sound, the next whizz-bang, the next boom-hiss, and the next and last and final darkness that will take me to oblivion.

ii) George Fitzmorris: Animal Exploration, Chimpanzee, Oct 30th, 2014

As I was lying thinking about what animal George could be, I kept coming back to a chimp. George is mischievous, loves to play games, and flirts with danger. I started on the ground and began with imaging my body being left behind and my animal body slowly overtaking. First my feet and hands changed, smaller, hairier, rounder, my feet lost their structures of toes and became smaller, rounder, as mobile and versatile as another set of hands. Then my legs grew shorter and curved. My body became covered with hair, my shoulders rounded. Then my eyes grew, my ears grew and my canine teeth grew. My senses were suddenly more alive. I became curious about everything in front of me. And although I knew there was potential danger all around me, all I wanted to do was play. I rolled around on the floor, getting used to my new body and how it responded to me. That's when I started to run around just to feel how my legs bounced. . Then I brushed past something, which I heard more than felt. I turned and there were green leaves hanging right in front of my nose. I grabbed a bundle, feeling them, smelling them, brushing my skin against their long skinny fibers across the pads of fingers and then realized how vulnerable they are. So easy to break. Then I touched the brown dirt below the plant, wet, gritty and rough

with glimpses of tenderness. Then I saw a blue chair that I immediately had to run to and swing myself onto it. It was so soft and comfortable and the blue was so bright to look at. Then I saw a big box that I ran up to to see what it was but it was empty so I hit my hand against it to see what sound it made. Loud! And fun! Then I saw strings hanging down and I ran to play with them between my fingers. They were attached to a scarf hidden behind a small, soft pillow. The strings moved quickly, shifting like sand and were so beautiful to look at. I was so curious about everything, every sound I heard had to be explored, every detail I saw had to be touched. Then I saw the window and ran up to it, sitting on a table, watching the sunlight, and feeling it as it poured through the streaks on the window.

Then I realized George is like a caged animal. Curious, mischievous, loves to play and is caught in a place where he has no space to move, no opportunity to play and has no control over his sense of safety. But in those moments that he can be curious, he plays and let's his mischief win, despite the potential danger or consequences. To me, it was significant by the moment I was hiding behind the plant, reaching for a giant, green, fluffy pillow but couldn't touch it because it was just out of my reach and I would have to leave the safety of being covered by the plant. It became a negotiation of safety vs. comfort and the need for safety won. Just like George would experience feeling in the trenches, stuck waiting because the alternative was too dangerous.

iii) George Fitzmorris, Animal Exploration, Meer Kat eyes, Erika Batdorf's movement class excerpt, November 25th, 2015

Today in Erika's class, I played with being/exploring in mineral, vegetable, animal, human animal and divine. I explored all those through George but the one most particularly interesting exploration came from the animal exercise.

I somehow landed on the meer kat. The meer kat was interesting for me because it allowed me to play with my eye relationship. Meer kats rely on sound and sight, are a pack animal. When they hear things their head/spine relationships line up and they tend to be in higher mounds. So for my eye relationship, it gave me the connection to keep my chin up and eye line steady and lateral, slightly downward. Simple head movements were inspired by sound and sight stimulus. It also gave me the fast spurts of movement followed by still moments to take information in. Size allowed me to be fast but also rooted to the vibrations of the ground.

Chapter Thirteen: Addendum, Process with Venus

I was asked by my oral defense committee to write an addendum on my process for the character of the Mother in *Venus*. My challenge and approach with this role was a different one than I had for my character in *Oh What a Lovely War*. It was also an experience in and of itself as we had already been in rehearsal for three weeks and the day I had my defense, York University went on strike. So I was given the task of creating a new process for myself in a highly unusual rehearsal process. This is what I did.

a). Rehearsal Process

- i. Text Work:
 - a. Read the play once
 - b. Read the play with my character's perspective in mind
 - c. Read the play with a writer's perspective and break down the scripts technically.
 - d. Answer three questions: What do I say about myself? What do others say about me? Do I believe them?
- ii. Voice Work:
 - a. Whispering and 'grokking' the text to incorporate it into my body.
- iii. Physical Work:
 - a. Physical character exploration; *Stage Beauty* and *RuPaul's Drag Race*.
- iv. Script Analysis:
 - a. Text work: Uta Hagen's 9 Questions, Drone Notes and Pivot and Posts.
- v. In Rehearsal and Relationships Between Characters
- vi. Performance, Warm Up and Conclusion

i) Text Work

To begin, I read the play. The first time was without any emphasis or judgment of one character but to understand the arc of the story itself. Then, I read the play again to view it from the perspective of my character and understand her story. If she were the main character of the play, how would she tell the story? I then began to ask questions to see what was informed by the text and what I would have to create for myself. What does she want? Who does she trust? What are her relationships to the others involved? Why did she choose to become an actor? I then read the play a third time but this time from the perspective of a writer to break the script down technically. What is the structure of the play? Where are the beginning, middle, and end? What is the moment of climax? And how does my character arc fit within that structure.

I then went through the play to answer three questions. What do I say about myself? What do others say about me? And do I believe them? The way *Venus* was written, the Mother was a character in a play-within-the-play. In terms of the writing, there was little said to give clues in this sense. Very little was said about my character by others, however there was a wealth of clues about my character in terms of how she spoke. There was a clear distinction of when she was in the context of the play-within-the-play or when she went off on a tangent. There was a particular section while talking to her Daughter-in-Law when the Mother goes on a tangent about the popular deaths of theatre. I took this as a clue of the actress playing the Mother taking the stage to discuss all the popular roles she has been known to play in the past, what she was known for as an actress. It was the moment where she could take center stage and, in her mind, finally give the audience what they wanted: the Diva in her best roles. But I also decided that the Mother was

more personality than an authentically good actor. It was fortunate that when I later came into the rehearsal room with Jamie, this lined up with how he envisioned her.

ii) Voice Work

During the next phase of my process, I breathed in the text followed by whispering the text and ‘grokking’. This was to see what came up naturally from the text. As I broke the script down and did some slow, detailed breath work, I allowed for the text to inform me about what was actually there versus what I was pre-judging. It allowed me to work out what my argument was. I followed this by then ‘grokking’ the text. Going word by word to process what images came up for each individual word and sifting through what my personal associations were to that word to see what was most helpful in the context of the play. This allowed me a deeper understanding of the text and what the words specifically meant to me.

iii) Physical Work

From there, one of the first things I concluded was that she would have to be a very physical character. That meant I had to introduce her physical exploration sooner. If she was an actor during the early nineteenth century when rib-reserve was in fashion, then gesture would be essential to her performance. So at David Smukler’s suggestion I watched the film *Stage Beauty* with Billy Crudup starring as Ned Kynaston, a highly regarded actor in the 17th century known for playing female roles. I watched his movements and gestures throughout the film and began to explore them with the Mother’s movements. It later became essential to the Mother’s acting style as she flourished her words with gestures. But because *Venus* does not exactly conform to the

time period it is set in, with modern colloquialisms interjected within the writing, I also decided to include some pop culture and research Drag Queens and their physicality. I knew that because the Mother was such a big presence and since Jamie Robinson, the director, wanted her to be the big diva, she was going to need the physical presence to back that up. To me, no one personifies the diva presence better than that of Drag Queens. So for inspiration, I watched clips from the show *RuPaul's Drag Race* to see how they moved, particularly during the dance portions of the show. I spent time in my physical practice simply moving around exploring the gestures from *Stage Beauty* or the physical movements from *RuPaul's Drag Race*. From there I began to construct the physical presence of the Mother. Her physical presence eventually became more staid, with rib reserve acting and gesture. Although I didn't incorporate a lot of the movements from the Drag Queen in the performance, that feeling of weighty presence came from my exploration of their fabulous physicality.

iv) Script Analysis

While in physical exploration I also continued to do more text work. For the Mother I chose to answer Uta Hagen's 9 Questions. While I tried the 26 questions for my characters in *Oh What a Lovely War*, I preferred the 9 Questions for the Mother. I determined who she was, where she came from, who her family was, what her career had been, what her objectives were and her obstacles. Jamie suggested we choose an actor from that time period and I settled on Sarah Siddons who was known because, "She was tall and had a striking figure, brilliant beauty, powerfully expressive eyes, and solemn dignity of demeanor which enabled her to claim the character as her own" (Chisholm). I imagined her as an actress who had experienced great success throughout her life but was now becoming a fading star who achieved one last hurrah

with the success of the play *For the Love of Venus*. She used this performance for her own selfish desires, although she did not view them as selfish. It was also interesting because her objectives became two-fold, one for her character within the play and another for her as an actress playing the role.

I also went through the script to decide what my ‘drone notes’ and ‘pivot and posts’ moments were. For a drone note, I chose one line for each scene that I believed was the most important thing my character said. For the Mother I chose, “Have faith in love,” for her first scene and “Let’s get to work,” for her second scene. For ‘pivot and posts’ I went through the text and identified the lines that were new information, a ‘post’, and the lines, which were a diversionary line to a new topic, a ‘pivot’. These were particularly helpful for the Mother’s monologue listing the various types of death. Pairing the textual analysis with physical gesture was also helpful for these moments because the ‘pivots and posts’ gave me a clear map to follow and inform where I needed to change gestures as my argument developed.

v) In Rehearsal and Relationships Between Characters

When I got into the rehearsal room, Jamie also put an interesting spin on it. He wanted Bob Wicks, the actor playing the Uncle, and I to hold casting sessions for the rest of the actors in the play-within-the-play and conduct what he called an “actor’s boot camp.” He gave Bob and I free-reign to do whatever we wanted. So we did. We made copies of the scenes for them to read, had pictures of their headshots, the whole nine yards. It was especially helpful in this sense because we got to play with the relationships outside of the play-within-the-play to see who these people were as actors and what the hierarchy was. It was extraordinary to play in this way because we

could establish who was at the top of the food chain in this theatre company and what repercussions would happen when another actor tried to challenge their roles. I determined that while Bob was the manager of the theatre company, I was second in charge and had been for 13 years. I also determined that I had a certain level of competition with the other female actor in the play-within-the-play. She was the young ingénue and I was the older actress who denied that I was a falling star and on my way out. That allowed me a certain direction within the play itself because when I felt my position was threatened, that was when I fell into a tangent.

Although there is a play-within-the-play in *Venus*, there are only a handful of scenes to fill in the holes, so Jamie also had us create the rest of the play. This was a challenge in and of itself but what it allowed us to do was work the scenes as our actor characters to then help us inform how we would play our roles during performance. This was great because it gave us room to play, especially me for my physical choices. I was able to go and in this construction play with gesture and physicality even if half of what I created would never be seen.

After a few weeks in rehearsal, with a little more guided information from Jamie on how he wanted to role to be played, I then went through the script again to analyze who wins and who loses within a scene. This is an extension of reading the script from the writer's perspective. If any given scene has a winner or a loser, there is a formula that occurs. Winner, meaning does your character achieve their objective at the end of the scene. That allowed me to look at the scene in terms of strategy. I also go through my objectives. I determine an outer and inner objective, outer meaning what I want others to see me do and inner what I really want to do. For example, for my second scene with the Bride-to-be, my outer objective was to commit to the scene but my inner objective was to steal the spotlight and make the audience forget about the

ingénue. Therefore, in terms of winning or losing, I lost my outer objective but I won in terms of my inner objective. However, Jamie changed how we did the scene later on from going on a tangent to my character forgetting her lines. Although my objective was still reached, I no longer won the scene because the ingénue had to come to my rescue.

vi) Performances, Warm Up and Conclusion

For performances, I applied nearly the same warm-up process as I did with my *Oh What a Lovely War* characters with a few changes. I kept my warm-up similar with a voice component, a physical warm-up component and a personal inventory. However, I did not use a rope. I also kept the positive affirmations, however I limited it down to one. The warm-ups were essential to allow freedom of voice and movement in what was a very contained, if big, physical presence.

The final result was a diva that loved the audience perhaps more than the show she worked on. She reveled in the connection to her audience because she was so threatened by her scene partner. Her applause meant she was validated. She was insecure and afraid of losing her shine so when she could she brought it back to her fans to give her the strength to continue, especially when she lost her words. Her motivations in the play-within-the-play informed me that she was content to lie back and live in her own world unless things spiraled out of control and she had to step in to fix it. I imagined her like an extremely wealthy housewife with an addiction to Percocet. She was an extremely fun character to play and my exploration of her with my new process gave me a playful and safe way to find her. When it came to performances, I didn't even get nervous. At that point she was too much fun to bother with getting nervous.

Works Cited

- Bellow, The Lone. "Two Sides of Lonely." The Lone Bellow. By Zach Williams. Descendant Records, 2013.
- Braybon, Gail. Women Workers in the First World War. London: Barnes & Noble Books, 1981.
- Brown, Malcolm. "The Christmas Truce 1914: The British Story." Ferro, Marc, Brown, Malcolm, Cazals, Remy, Mueller, Olaf. Meetings in No Man's Land. Trans. Helen McPhail. London: Constable, 2005.
- Cameron, Julia. The Artist's Way. New York: Penguin Putnam, 2002.
- Childs, Joachim Stoeber and Julian H. "Taylor Francis Online." Journal of Personality Assessment 92.6 (2010): 577.
- Chisholm, Hugh. "Siddons, Sarah." Chisholm, Hugh. Encyclopedia Britannica. 11th Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1911.
- Feitis, Rosemary, ed. Ida Rolf Talks About Roling and Physical Reality. Vol. 1. Boulder: Rolf Institute, 1978.
- Ida Rolf Talks About Roling and Physical Reality. Ed. Rosemary Feitis. Boulder: Rolf Institute, 1978.
- Fisher, Rett. "U.S. News Report." 5 09 2012. U.S. News Report and Help. 12 08 2012 <<http://health.usnews.com/health-news/articles/2012/09/05/roling-no-longer-a-fringe-therapy>>.
- Grimm, Jacob and Wilhelm. Iron Henry. 1909. Harvard Classics. 14 08 2014 <<http://www.bartleby.com/17/2/1.html>>.
- Jung, Carl. The Collected Works of Carl Jung. Ed. Herbert Read. Trans. R.F.C. Hull. Vol. 9. New York: Bollingen Foundation Inc., 1959. 1 vols.
- Jessica D. Payne, Matthew A. Tucker, Jeffrey M. Ellenbogen, Erin J. Wamsley, Matthew P. Walker, Daniel L. Schacter, Robert Stickgold. Memory for Semantically Related and Unrelated Declarative Information: The Benefit of Sleep, the Cost of Wake. 22 March 2012. Internet Systems Consortium. 14 August 2012 <<http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0033079>>.
- Koltai, Judith. Embodied Speaking. 14 08 2014 <http://www.embodiedpractice-judithkoltai.com/#!__embodied-speaking>.
- Syntonics. 14 08 2014 <http://www.embodiedpractice-judithkoltai.com/#!__syntonics>.
- Littlewood, Joan. Joan's Book. London: Methuen, 2003.
- Marwick, Arthur. Women At War. Glasgow: Fontana Paperbacks , 1977.
- Morris, Eric. Books. October 2014 <<http://ericmorris.com/book/>>.
- No Acting Please. Los Angeles: Ermor Enterprises Publishing, 1977.
- Oxford English Dictionary. 14 08 2014 <<http://www.jessesword.com/sf/view/1646>>.
- Smart, Jack. "How to Cry at a Moment's Notice, Interview with Marion Cotillard." 14 Nov 2014. Backstage. 28 January 2015 <<http://www.backstage.com/interview/marion-cotillard-how-cry-moments-notice/>>.
- Rolf, Ida P. Rolting: Reestablishing the Natural Alignment and Structural Integration of the Human Body for Vitality and Well-Being. Rochester: First Healing Arts Press Edition, 1989.
- Tynan, Kenneth. "The Guardian." 24 March 1963. Kenneth Tynan on Joan Littlewood and Oh What a Lovely War. October 2014 <<http://www.theguardian.com/stage/2014/jan/31/kenneth-tynan-on-oh-what-a-lovely-war>>.
- Utterbeck, Neil. "Embodied Memory and Extra-Daily Gesture." Affective Performance and Cognitive Science. Ed. Nicola Shaughnessy. Fakenham: Bloomsbury, 2013. 152.

- Wangh, Stephen. Acrobat of the Heart. New York: Random House Inc, 2000.
- Weintraub, Stanley. Silent Night: the Story of the Worl War I Christmas Truce. New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 2001.
- Williams, Tennessee. 14 08 2014
<<http://shsdavisapes.pbworks.com/w/file/attach/76523768/Cat%20on%20a%20Hot%20Tin%20Roof.pdf>>.
- White, Matthew. First World War. February 2011. October 2014
<<http://necrometrics.com/20c5m.htm#WW1>>.
- Woodman, Marion. Addiction to Perfection. Ed. Daryl Sharp. Toronto: Inner City Books, 1982.

Appendix

Appendix A: Molly Suffolk, 26 Questions, excerpts from Journal

get the brunt of it. People say I'm always in the know because of it tho, even if it's a fact they always forget. Even though I am a bubbly social creature people are drawn to, I tend to keep to myself. People think I am fun, that I know, but I think ~~they~~ I ~~don't~~ don't realize they see that I am more removed than I care to admit. I think I hide it really well. Some of others see better.

(1) What are my physical quirks?

I'm knock-kneed & pigeon toed so I can bounce some when I walk. I can hide physically in my movements unless I am excited or joking around I move with the gravity of a woman but the yet-not-shed frenetic energy of a young lady. The movement of someone who hasn't yet experienced the soul-crushing heartache of losing someone extremely close to you. I can command a team if need be, something I learned working in a male-dominated field. When I'm trying to prove myself - I'll get a little more chest out / hip sway-ey.

26 Q's contd.

- 14) What is my basic action? (main obj - verb)
To gather information + cultivate my friendships
- 15) Moment - moment obj.'s
- ① To leave work for the day + head home
 - ② To stop + chat + catch up with my lady friends
 - ③ Major switch - to see the list of the deceased + pray to God that no one I know is on it.
 - ④ When assured that no one I know on there, to gossip w/ the girls, particularly to let them know another pig push is coming.
 - ⑤ To reflect on the dangers of ~~the~~ my job + take a little pleasure in the challenge of the work compared to the other girls working textiles
 - ⑥ To lighten the mood after talking about the gravity of the danger
 - ⑦ To ~~process~~ distill what the meaning of shrouds is - + why they need so many.
 - ⑧ To mosey home to eat dinner, listen to the radio + knit.
 - ⑨ To be impacted + ~~implied~~ ^{crumbe} when I receive the letter of Jimmy's death.

close to her but I do trust her.
 - when I chat with them all - I feel most comfortable talking to ~~Sam~~.

④ What do I want from them? How do I get it? Do they come through? (Did I win?)
 If not then what? (changing tactics)

① I want validation of friendship - yes

② I want information of what they are looking at - yes

③ I want to share information - privileged to me bc of where I work - yes

④ I want to impress them - yes (by detailing the horrifying dangers of my work)

⑤ I want to offer them some comfort by ~~changing~~ changing perspective on the situation + saying you've just got to carry on. - Yes (but tentatively - the subject doesn't change) - change tactics by down-pulling

⑥ textiles + saying I'd rather be on munitions.

⑥ For now, I win + get what I want.

→ Corey - letter carrier. I have seen his once or twice before. He is the scariest person in the world because he can completely shatter your world w/out saying a word. Just handing off a piece of paper in an envelope. I hope to God he doesn't come to me but when he does, I can see it in his eyes. I know.

punctured in the chest, I collapse from there, imploding, one body part falling in pieces from another. My chest becomes a black hole that swallows all sensation + sounds. All I can hear is Jimmy saying "Come into my arms, my heart." And then I realize ~~the~~ my greatest fears come true. My love, my Jimmy, my heart is gone. My legs collapse before I realize I am sitting again. I feel sick, like my own body is ceasing to function and I feel numb everywhere.

22. Jimmy Suffolk, my husband + childhood love, was conscripted into the war + had been away for 2 years. I have since started working in an ammunition's factory to bide my time until the war ends. I'm proud of the work I get to do.

Jimmy and I grew up together, a shared first kiss at 10, our first serious kiss at 14, and then married when I was 18 + he 20. At first we didn't have children because Jimmy went to University to become a lawyer. Then we decided to wait to travel the continent but then the war started. He didn't leave in the first wave but was eventually

conscripted. Though I was already friends with my neighbours, I became closer with them as we watched more and more of our friends disappear. I began working to support the war effort & to help in any way, thinking I was helping Jimmy.

I had 2 sisters working as well, although I don't get to see them quite as often b/c they live on the opposite sides of town & we weren't super close to begin with.

I had a rough upbringing. Jimmy was my protector. He didn't often have to interfere but in a few particular moments, he was there. He always was there for me. He brought me back to life, to laughter. I knew that while I was with him, I was always home.

~~Since~~ Since he was conscripted & the war started, I got a job at the factory. I was used to being around rough men so the pranks, the isolation, the attitudes, I've been used to. I love working, using my hands to build something. I've worked at the factory for 20 months now, and have done

pretty well. My father drank himself to death before the war started so when it came to hearing about men dying, I lost plenty of friends, people I grew up with or knew, even some cousins. But no one close to me, not like Jimmy.

So that day, I was walking home like every other day. I had seen my older sister the night before so I had "Sister Susie" stuck in my head since we used to sing it together. I was tired from a long day and looking forward to getting home & putting my feet up.

23 What is about to happen?

I am about to meet up with my neighbours to talk in the street, our nightly ritual where we chat & knit in the street, something I am still new to. As I walk up to them, I see that they are looking at something, so I ask what - it's the new casualty lists. We talk about those we've lost and I alert the ladies about another big push coming - they say ~~no~~ I know that because I get the news in conditions, even though it's a dangerous place to work. A's character says because

of all the men, she wouldn't work there, I joke as if it's wonderful to have it not seem as bad. Then A says that there's a big push for shrouds and reality descends upon us for a moment before we all go our separate ways. Then as I'm sitting at home, enjoying myself, I become aware of someone standing before me. When I look up, I see it's a soldier. Not just any soldier. A soldier holding an envelope. The envelope. And when I look into his eyes & see the pity there I know. I know it's Jimmy. There's no way it could be anyone else. And then it's as if my own bomb had dropped.

(24) Do I know that?

I know I would see the gals but I didn't know about the casualty lists or the shrouds. The soldier & letter is by far the biggest shock I will ever have in my life.

(25) How much information do I have? Do I use it?

My knowledge about the push is helpful and I do use it to gain acclaim.

with my friends.

② How much information do I have/use
(as actor)

Since the scene itself is an interesting departure from the continuous battlefield of the play, the text information isn't as fruitful but does give just enough to create a world and imagination does the rest. For Molly, she clearly values the work she does + the status it gives her because of its excitement (explosions, good pay) but it's also not the end-all for her. She has a life outside of it, a family, friends. She uses her work to impress others, and appears to be a bit of a leader among her peers since they listen to her. I use that to my advantage.

Appendix B: Example from prompt Book, Third Girl Scene

obj	obstacle	e>f A C
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> want - comfort my friend who's worried about losing her man - reveal new information to display "I'm in the know" or "I know a juicy piece of news first" - validate that my position is a valuable one because of access to information - Extrapolate/qualify that it's a well-paid position - Warn that it comes at a price - that not everyone is cut out to do it. - Follow the change of subject (don't fight it) - Deny the fear that comes w/ shrouds - deny that I think about Jimmy being wrapped in a shroud 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to not come off as patronizing or make her worry more / validate or empathize her fears - to not come off too bratty - to make them feel included instead of alienated - to be humble but still accept praise / prove I'm knowledgeable - to provide information of good pay - but at a distance so it doesn't appear that I'm bragging - to warn them w/o totally scaring them - to appear that the explosions/danger are not that big a deal - to not collapse w/ worry/fear over Jimmy being wrapped in a shroud 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - s's A>.d--- - .l'o ,/fcx\te - \)lQ...l -\ "OG\hf. - Lt ! - -i'!! - t-e... VQ.VS l";r'l" w/...n,) u.rd- - share story then immediately provide positive perspective bait/switch - cajole the sister connection w/ other - jest - make a joke - Knit + daudnear

82 Oh What a Lovely War

Keep the Home Fires burning
While your hearts are yearning,
Though the lads are far away,
They dream of home.
There's a silver lining,
Through the dark clouds shining,
Turn the dark cloud inside out,
Till the boys come home.

Newspanel SEPT 20 ... MENIN ROAD ... BRITISH LOSS
22,000 MEN GAIN 800 YARDS ... SEPT 25 ... POLYGON WOOD
... BRITISH LOSS 17,800 MEN GAIN 1,000 YARDS.

During the newspanel two Lancashire Lasses walk across the stage, as if walking along a street.

First Girl Hey look, another casualty list. (She goes with the **Second Girl** to look at the list.) Makes you shiver, don't it?

Second Girl Ec! All those Arkwrights. That's three she's lost.

First Girl Four. It'll be 'Arry this time, used to be a loom jobber.

A **Third Girl** comes.

Third Girl (calls) [What you looking at?]

Second Girl Casualty list.

Third Girl [Oh my God! Let's ave a look.]

First Girl All those Arkwrights. Y'know they're bringing 'em 'ome at night now, don't yer?

Third Girl [They're letting 'em out of the prisons an' all.]

Second Girl What for?

Third Girl [Because there's another big push coming, that's what I 'eard.]

Second Girl ('Course, you work in munitions, don't yer?)

Third Girl [Yeah, first to 'ear about these things.]

Newspanel:
On the Homefront

Sister Susie

Archetype: The Lower
The Princess

OO Sit + knit, catch up
on gossip w/ the ladies
of my neighbourhood
I.O. To gain validation
from my peers (job, perks
of working munitions) to
take my mind off of the
fears of work hazards
+ Jimmy fighting in the
war being in danger

-walk on singing SS. -
daydreaming enter USL
carrying knitting needles
↳ cross US mid
sit + knit, straps out
from bucket - Leave
for Dean to pick up.

First Girl Get a good screw* too, don't ycr?

tallllllcBll [yeah! One **i** In my department knocke4 - up tbrcc pounds las' week)

First Girl Get away!

Secollid Girl That's where the mpney jsl Wouldn'tD work down there, tho' ... all those men ...

Q **Bl**(:yeh! An' it can be a bit dangerous - all! We ad an e: Xploslast week, one of the girls got blown to smithereew. o use wruring, tho', is it! You've .!st got to on:)

First Girl(we're on overtime.

Clllllll—(i)h yeah! You're on cottOn, aren't yer? My sister works down there)

First Girl -Well, they're on. some funny stuff this 'Qiey say it's for shrouds! Makes yer shiver, don't it? **J**

Thg all strWtr.

Gives me theoon' be on

•mw,utwns. **J**

CJM

WALTJNO TILDA

music is distant at first.

Second Girl What's that then?

First Girl It's a band, innit?

They run downstage and peer out towards the back of the audience.

Third Girl [It's the Aussies! (Shouts.) Up the Aussies!]

The Girls smile and wave.

Newspanel OCT 12 ... PASCHENDAELE ... BRITISH LOSS 13,000 MEN IN 3 HOURS ... GAIN 100 YARDS.

Third Girl [Don't they look brown!]

First Girl 'Andsome.

Continue knitting from home, turn on the radio to hear

Keep the home fires burning

- Reminded of Jimmy says I want to think of him whenever I hear the song.

- Think of the wager that Jimmy said I couldn't finish knitting a sweater by the time he got home - I will!

- Think of the first thing we'll do together when he comes home - maybe go to the beach

Think of the beautiful baby boy we'd have - with his green eyes & curly mop of brown hair. - see a pair of feet - look up. It's a soldier holding a letter. No, I know who he is. "Come into my arms, ... - heart."